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Never call retreat.

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Never Call Retreat

Never Call Retreat

by
JOSEPH FREEMAN

*He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall
never call retreat.*

—BATTLE HYMN OF THE REPUBLIC

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*This book is for
my mother.*

*All this is true in a way precisely
because it is false in a way.*

ST. AUGUSTINE

THIS STORY is sheer fantasy. The author has done his best to avoid realism in plot, detail and language. All characters, places, situations, institutions, movements, causes, countries, governments, creeds, ideas, conversations, books, writers and historical references are intended to be imaginary. Any resemblance these may have to anything in the real world, past, present or future, is an accident the author regrets. There ought to be algebraic symbols to designate lowest common denominators and highest common factors of human experience. In the absence of a literary mathematic, it has been necessary to employ invention, image and simile. This novel is consequently neither document, allegory, parable, sermon, nor political tract; it is meant to be, in the first place, "a tale that is told"; in the second, a kind of poem.

The Aim Is Victory

NAPOLEON was by no means an ideal human being, but he knew the business of war. "If it comes to battle," he said, "let it be victory, come what may: he who thinks of anything but this single aim is lost." Is it necessary to give the forces of evil a monopoly on this wisdom of the ages? No, we are fully awake at last. The American people are ready to defend their land, life and freedom. Our role among the nations liberating the world from the madmen who seek to devour it will not be small. Enormous resources are here, swift skilled labor, genius for organization, and the marvelous courage and fighting stamina of a fresh free people. Everything is here required for victory.

And victory is what we want above all things: the quickest possible victory; sure, remorseless, crushing; victory that will leave no trace of the sanguinary monsters who have befouled the earth; victory in which every American regardless of age, sex, creed, race or color does his just share of fighting, working, buying war bonds; victory that will reward in a thousand living ways our love of liberty, our unity as a free people, our determination to preserve and improve the good life.

Five thousand years of history have not seen an hour like this. The future of the world is literally in the hands of simple, decent men and women everywhere ready to give all that the world may be secure, just and free. In this immense hour deciding the destiny of man, every American home is a fortress; every factory, farm and office a battlefield; every branch of military and civilian service a sacred call, a glorious opportunity. Let us take our posts. Let us fight to win. The aim is victory.

JOSEPH FREEMAN

Never Call Retreat

*True, I talk of dreams,
Which are the children of an idle brain,
Begot of nothing but vain fantasy.*
--*Romeo and Juliet*

86-B CENTRAL PARK WEST

July 21, 1942.

MR. RUSSELL HAGUE
President, Hague Publications
600A Fifth Avenue
New York City

My dear Hague:

I see by the papers that at last you've come in from Europe. You do get around, you lucky dog! And in times like these, too, when "on horror's head horrors accumulate," when the entire world is being reshaped in war, and America stands at Armageddon and battles for the right.

Your articles from London were splendid, by far the best you've ever written, I think. The heroic struggle of the British people seems to have evoked the finest things in you. You were lucky to get to Moscow, too. I'm glad you feel so enthusiastic about the Russians. What a people!

Things have been happening to me, too. The papers say you plan to remain in New York quite a while, so I'm looking forward to some good long talks soon. There's something I particularly want to discuss with you. Meantime, I'm mailing you what I wrote down during the seven months you were abroad. This will give you a chance to think about the matter before we talk it over. I confess it has occupied my own thoughts a great deal, and believe if you will read through the whole of the manuscript which accompanies this letter, you will want to reflect on it yourself.

In a way the thing began on New Year's Eve at the farewell party you gave before taking off for London. I have since wondered whether it was the wine or the war that prompted your flattering offer that night. You said to me:

"Why don't you write some stories for my magazine based on case histories in your practice?"

At first the idea fascinated me. There is something very tempting about the notion that one may be an artist after all. I have often thought about this curious temptation. One of Europe's mightiest dictators fancies himself a painter, another a musician. You might think that

type of man would be satisfied with controlling half the world. But no: he must insist also upon being gifted with some creative art.

This pose is based on a profound truth. Power forces people into submission; art wins their love.

For analogous reasons, I suppose, the scientist also toys with the idea of creative art. Science gives us knowledge; art, vision; and most of us want to apprehend the mysteries of life beyond their formulation in abstract or practical law.

A psychoanalyst like myself is especially susceptible to the lure of literature. Nowhere in the world, not even in the secret confessionals of the church, does a man strip his soul so naked as in the analyst's office. To us the patient's experience comes as nearly complete as it possibly can: or so we believe. We are in a position to know the whole of what a man feels, thinks and does; it is our job to bring into the light of day emotions which a man denies, thoughts he has long forgotten and actions he fiercely repudiates. And there, we sometimes imagine, is the richest material for stories about contemporary life.

You see how strongly your offer tempted me. Yet, the more I considered it, the more difficult the whole business appeared. There is a great difference between experience and art. Much of what a patient tells me cannot be printed in a popular magazine. Then, what is most likely to interest your readers may be of the least clinical value, while factors of clinical value may bore them.

A doctor finds the detailed report of a case history exciting, just as a mathematician finds a page of calculus exciting; the layman is neither predisposed nor trained to appreciate either. To convey the essential idea to him, to stir his imagination and feelings, you need a writer, a man endowed with the gift of transforming direct experience and abstract ideas into what we call art.

I am a scientist who can analyze experience without being able to re-create it. So my final decision about your generous offer had to be no.

I was on the point of writing you this when a curious case came into my office. I want to tell you about this case, provided you understand that I am not submitting this to you as an editor, but am simply telling you the facts as a friend.

The day after New Year's, at ten o'clock in the morning, just as my first patient had left, the telephone rang. I picked up the receiver and heard a man's voice:

"Dr. Foster?" The voice had a slight foreign accent. "My name is Schuman—Professor Paul Schuman. I met you at Mr. Hague's party New Year's Eve."

I did not remember him.

"I must see you, doctor," the voice said urgently. "I need your help."

"How about Tuesday next week?"

"O no! I can't wait that long."

He sounded frightened, so I told him to come to my office at three that afternoon.

At three sharp, the nurse ushered in a man of about forty, slim, well-built, with a sensitive, intelligent face. He stood quietly in the center of the room until the nurse went out.

"Dr. Foster?" he said timidly.

From behind my desk I shook hands with Professor Schuman and motioned him into the chair facing me.

"Tell me about it," I said.

"There's very little to tell," Schuman said with hesitation. I was silent, in the best traditions of the profession. "I am ill, doctor." The voice was now harsh with emotion.

"What seems to be wrong?"

"I can't work."

That is a very common complaint among neurotics when they first seek the psychoanalyst's help.

"How do you spend your time?" I asked.

"I spend . . . my time . . . in . . . the movies."

Obviously he did not know how commonplace that complaint also is among neurotic patients. The film is a wonderful thing, one of the very greatest inventions of our civilization; but, like almost everything else, the neurotic manages to use it for his own purposes. Movies can be a marvelous escape; they are less expensive than alcohol and the neurotic gets more out of them. He can take the ready-made dream on the screen and adapt it to the requirements of his illness. Every week he can live through different imaginary experiences and identify himself with any number of characters, for there is in every film at least one who satisfies his erotic fantasies or sense of guilt.

"There's nothing abnormal about going to the movies," I said.

"You don't understand, doctor. I don't simply *go* to the movies. I *live* there. On many days I start with an eleven-o'clock show in the morning, and wander from theater to theater until past midnight. Don't you think that's abnormal?"

"It is rather unusual," I granted tentatively. "When did you first become a film addict?"

"I always liked the movies, even in Vienna." The smile that lit his face at this moment rendered him very charming. I sensed that his reluctance to speak was about to break down in a deluge of words. "You wouldn't believe it, doctor, but in Vienna my two greatest passions were my work and the movies. I have always been especially

fond of American films." He leaned over my desk and dropped his voice to a confidential level, as if he were about to impart a secret or a discovery of some kind. "Do you know why we used to like American films in Europe, doctor? You see, the grandson is proud of his grandfather's great past, and the grandfather is proud of his grandson's first steps; you Americans used to flock to our art galleries, while we flocked to your movies."

I did not think his theory required my professional attention at the moment, so I said nothing. As is sometimes the case, my silence started him off on a tangent.

"I don't want to create any misconceptions in your mind," he said. "I don't mean to say that movies destroyed my love of painting."

He fell into a painful, stubborn silence which lasted a long time. I decided to break the resistance and direct his attention into some channel which might yield fruitful material.

"Professor Schuman," I said, "obviously it's not the movies that trouble you."

His pale face assumed a puzzled expression, and his eyes looked intently at the glass top of my desk.

"You're right," he said quietly. "It's something else."

"What is it?"

"I can't work. I'm wasting my life."

"What is your work?"

"In Vienna I used to be professor of Kulturgeschichte at the university. How shall I explain it? Let us say, the history of Western culture. But really, that's not a good translation of the term. You Americans use the word 'culture' in a narrower sense than we do. Let us say, then: the history of Western civilization. I gave general courses on that subject, but my specialties were the French Revolution and the transition from the Roman Empire to the Middle Ages. That last we used to call the origins and foundations of Europe. I even wrote a book on that subject."

"What was it called?"

"*From Augustus to Augustine.*"

"Is that your field in America, too?"

"Since I arrived in this country, I have received several teaching offers. But I have been unable to accept any of them. I don't seem to be able to settle down to work. I feel unfit to teach."

"Are you writing anything—a new book, magazine articles?"

"No, doctor, that's just the point. I fritter away my time in a dream world. I live in the movies. I go there day and night. To . . . to . . . escape, I suppose."

"From what?"

"I don't know, doctor. Perhaps . . . my fear."

"What are you afraid of?"

"I don't know. I'm just afraid. In general."

I saw he was doing his best to avoid the thing that really worried him, so I tried another tack.

"When did you come to America, professor?" I said.

"Recently, though it feels like a century ago. I've lost the sense of time. I should say it was about three months ago."

"Did you experience anything painful or shocking?"

His charming smile came back, and I could see from the sparkle in his eyes that, under normal circumstances, he was capable of wit and humor.

"Nothing unusual, doctor," he said. "I spent three years in a concentration camp." His face became serious again. "There's not much I can tell you about that. These camps are more or less alike, though ours did have some special features. There are many books describing concentration camps. You must have read some of them."

"Yes," I admitted. "I have read about concentration camps."

"That's our Zeitgeist," he said, smiling. "Literature is the mirror of our souls. Twenty years ago we were reading about love; ten years ago, about economic distress. Five years ago there was an orgy of murder mysteries: we were coyly, obliquely approaching the violent spirit of the times. Now we take the bitter medicine directly: we read about concentration camps. And what could be more appropriate? Every age has its corresponding architecture. The tenth century had its castle; the thirteenth, its cathedral; the eighteenth, its laboratory; the nineteenth, its bank; and the twentieth—its concentration camp."

"What most shocked you during the three years of your imprisonment?" I said.

Schuman grinned. I knew at once I should not have put that question.

"Now, doctor," he said with mock gravity, "you don't think you can locate my trauma that simply, do you?"

"No," I said, "not if you came here to conceal it."

"What was your question, doctor?"

"I asked: what most shocked you during the three years of your imprisonment."

"Very well, doctor, I'll tell you. But I must warn you: it won't be what you expect."

I handed him a cigarette and lit one myself. We smoked in silence for a moment, then he said:

"The most terrible thing I encountered was not the clubbing or the whipping. It wasn't seeing men kicked senseless, or their faces smashed with rubber truncheons till they were a pulp of blood."

His face turned pale; he shuddered.

"I even saw two fellow prisoners executed," he said, "but that wasn't the worst either."

He inhaled his cigarette deeply, blew out the smoke and went on.

"Those things were terrible, doctor. The brutality of those people is inconceivable unless you have seen it with your own eyes and felt it on your own body. But that wasn't it. There was something far more terrible than that."

He looked straight ahead with a clear intense light in his eyes.

"That thing was hate," he said. "Yes, a monstrous hate poisoned that camp. At first I could not grasp its depth and scope. Then I refused to believe my senses. But there it was. And when I did realize it, I nearly went mad."

He covered his face with his hands. After a while I said in a calm, professional voice:

"Naturally the guards hated the prisoners. The tormentor is bound to hate his victim. It was also natural for the prisoners to hate the guards, don't you think?"

Professor Schuman looked up and said:

"I'm afraid I didn't make myself clear, doctor. Of course the tormentor and his victim hate each other. That hatred is horrible, but you expect it; you become accustomed to it. No, no, that isn't what shocked me. It was something else, something I did not expect at all."

He leaned forward across my desk, his face taut, and said in a low voice:

"That thing was *the hatred of the victims for each other.*"

His keen gray eyes searched mine eagerly, as if he wanted to make sure I understood what he was saying.

"Yes, yes!" he went on. "Facing their common foe, suffering in common the shattering cruelty from the identical source, the victims nevertheless hated each other! Not even the enormous calamity which had overpowered them all could obliterate the old rancors. These ought now to have appeared insignificant. Instead, they took on fantastic proportions."

He closed his eyes for a moment, then opened them again. They were shadowed with melancholy.

"Can't you see how awful that was, doctor? I think that's how my illness really started. It was in my prison cell that I first saw it."

He stopped abruptly. I waited in silence for him to go on, but he said nothing.

"You just said that you first saw it in the camp," I encouraged him. "Can you remember what it was?"

"Things," he said limply, in a barely audible voice.

"You mean hallucinations?"

"No, no, doctor! Not at all. It was something quite different."

"A fantasy?" I suggested.

"No, not a fantasy either. A fantasy is something that happens in your imagination. This was not a fantasy. But it wasn't a hallucination either. You have a hallucination when your imagination projects its fantasies into the external world. You see and hear your fantasies outside your body, so to speak, and you suffer from the illusion that they are real. In this case it happened quite differently. I saw and heard things outside of me, but had no illusion they were real. They seemed real, yes. But I was perfectly well aware that they *were* imaginary. That's no hallucination."

"What would you call it?" I asked.

"The name for that sort of thing," Schuman said, "is an old and honorable one. The ancient prophets saw it, medieval saints saw it, and even a modern poet like William Blake saw it. I should call it a vision."

This was a revelation of prime importance, and I made no comment. I did keep in mind, however, that visions and hallucinations may be the products of a neurotic state of mind, but they may also occur in normal, healthy people. Freud specifically says visions may appear "spontaneously in health" or "as symptoms in the psychoneuroses." He tells us that he himself as a young man used to hear his name suddenly pronounced by "an unmistakable dear voice." Yet Freud was one of the sanest men who ever lived.

"Have you had these visions often?" I asked.

"In a sense there was only one vision," Professor Schuman said. "I'm speaking now only of the vision, not of the long dream I had before that. Would it interest you to know that I dreamed for twelve hours continuously one night? That was just before they were going to execute me."

"Yes, that would interest me very much," I said as casually as I could. "But just now I think it would be better if you went on talking about your vision. There was only one, you say?"

"Basically it was only one, doctor. But I saw it in three installments. The first part I saw in my cell at the concentration camp; the second in a Swiss village while waiting to go to New York. And night before last when I got home from Mr. Hague's party, the third installment of the vision came to me. This time there was a greater dread than ever, but that dread was followed by the most extraordinary exaltation I have ever experienced."

He lit another cigarette, puffed at it thoughtfully and added:

"The other night I was told you are a leading psychoanalyst. So this morning, terrified by the recurrence of the vision, I decided to phone you. I really need your help, doctor."

I saw no point in carrying the preliminaries further.

"We'll begin your treatment now," I said.

I turned to my desk and made a few entries in my notebook, re-cording Schuman's name, address, telephone number, age and other routine items of that kind. Then I directed him to lie down on the couch at the other end of the room. I sat down in the armchair directly behind the head of the couch. Schuman lay very still, unusually so; rather stiffly, too. Like a corpse, I thought.

"You will come here every day except Sunday at this hour," I said. "And you will talk as freely as you can. You must say everything that comes into your mind."

"Everything?" Schuman said in a dull voice. "I'm sorry. That was a stupid question. This part I ought to know. Certainly everything."

"Yes," I said, "everything that comes into your mind, no matter how unpleasant, unimportant, irrelevant, senseless or shocking it may seem to you."

"Yes, doctor."

"Another thing: don't discuss what goes on in this analysis with anyone but me."

"There's nobody with whom I would want to discuss this."

"Don't discuss it anyway."

"Yes, Dr. Foster."

"One more thing. Don't make any important changes in your life until further instructions. Leave things as they are for the time being. And now you may begin."

"Shall I tell you the story of my life, doctor?"

This man, I said to myself, is intelligent and educated. He is sane, healthy, normal. Terrible experiences have shaken him badly; the result is a neurotic state of mind. But he is obviously a man accustomed to having his intelligence treated respectfully. I'll have to open the analysis cautiously, with full regard for his understanding.

"Sometimes," I said in answer to his question, "I begin the treatment by asking the patient to give me the whole story of his life and illness. But I don't think we'll start that way."

"Any way you like, doctor," he said. He was beginning too amiably. I knew he was going to give me trouble.

"Even in the best of circumstances," I said, "the information which the patient gives me at the start is never enough to let me see my way about the case. The first account of the story is like an unnavigable river. At one moment the stream is clogged with rocks; at another it is divided and lost among the shallows and sandbanks. As a historian of civilization, you undoubtedly know something about psychoanalysis. You must know that a patient is incapable of giving a smooth, precise account of his case. He can give plenty of coherent information about

this or that period of his life, but there are always periods when his communication runs dry; he leaves gaps unfilled, riddles unanswered. Then there is sure to come a period which will remain totally obscure; the patient isn't able to give me a single piece of useful information."

"You make it sound very difficult, doctor."

"The more you realize how difficult it is, the less difficult it will actually be," I said. "With your background, I think you'll find it useful to know some things in advance, though you'll rediscover them for yourself later on. For instance, I don't expect you to give me an *ordered* history of your life. No patient can do it. We know from long experience that the connections are for the most part incoherent, and the sequence of the various events uncertain."

Schuman lay very still on the couch; I could see by looking down on his face he was listening very attentively. He seemed to like the idea of being taken into my professional confidence and being treated as an equal.

"Tell me, doctor," he said. "Why is a patient unable to give an ordered history of his life?"

"There are several reasons," I said. "In the first place, he consciously and intentionally keeps back part of what he ought to tell. He knows these things perfectly well, but conceals them out of timidity, shame or discretion about other people."

Schuman smiled broadly.

"I'm a modern man," he said. "I know how to avoid that kind of nonsense."

"There is still another difficulty," I said. "Part of what the patient actually remembers vanishes while he is telling the story. He doesn't deliberately keep the material back; it just disappears. Later it comes back as memory."

He thought in silence for a moment, then said:

"Shall I talk only about my illness, or may I talk about the world in general, too?"

"Talk about anything that occurs to you."

"You mean I just let my thoughts wander all over the place, so to speak?"

"Yes, all over the place—but only so to speak."

"Instead of A Thousand and One Arabian Nights, A Thousand and One Freudian hours," he said, smiling.

"Not that long, I hope. What made you say that about the Arabian Nights?"

"It does sound silly," he said.

"Do you remember how that book opens?"

"Yes. Scheherazade must keep telling stories to save herself from being executed."

"That's right. And do you remember how the book ends?"

"Scheherazade tells so many stories and such good ones that she's *not* executed."

"Yes, her life is spared; she lives happily ever afterward," I said.

"I don't know how good my stories will be," he said. "But I promise to keep telling them till we've reached our goal."

I noticed he said "we," and decided this was the moment to get down to business.

"Perhaps," I said, "you will find it easiest to begin by telling me about your vision. Talk freely. Say whatever comes into your mind, however irrational it may seem."

"Very well," Professor Schuman said, smiling. I sat back in the arm-chair at the head of the couch, lit my pipe and watched his face as he began talking.

Subsequently, after every session, I made it a habit to set down on paper what Schuman told me. He has now been seeing me for an hour every day during the past seven months. The manuscript I am enclosing with this letter is his story in so far as it concerns his vision. There has been, of course, a great deal of other material, but I have omitted everything that pertains to the somatic data and symptoms of the disorder and have kept only the human and social circumstances which explain how Schuman came to see what he saw.

There is nothing supernatural or mystical about Schuman's story, despite its journey across the vast horizons of time. It is unreal without ever leaving the solid ground of reality, suffused in mystery without being mysterious, full of faith without falling into dogma. Schuman's profession is, in this case, a rare stroke of luck; it is just as natural for his fantasy to draw its metaphors from history as for yours to draw them from the details of your daily life. History *was* Schuman's daily life; after years of preoccupation with the saga of the Western world he found Eusebius, Napoleon, Dante, Cromwell, Milton, Robespierre and Shelley as close to him as the friends he knew in Vienna or the prisoners who shared his cell in the concentration camp.

When a man dreams about Napoleon, he may mean the historical figure or he may unconsciously use the Emperor as a symbol for another person, someone in his family and very close to him. How much of Schuman's dreams and visions are historical, as he imagines they are, and how much of them is symbolical of an internal drama that agitates his own soul is a problem for the analysis. It can make no difference to you, who ought to read this account as you would a poem or a novel, accepting the symbols as they stand and reading into them whatever you like. My job is to adjust people to the existing world, that world is outside the clinic. I can't change it; only mankind can. I am an analyst concerned with the patient's mind. But you are an editor

concerned with the world. My patient was ill and saw a vision; that is my business; yet the essence of what he saw exists in the real world; and that, my dear Hague, is your business.

You will notice that every once in a while Professor Schuman says some rather unkind things about me. It is part of the treatment and the technical name for it is *resistance*. Sometimes this resistance takes a wholly neurotic form; but occasionally the analyst is privileged to hear a truth which it would do him a lot of good to take into consideration. I say this to prepare you for what the professor had to say about you once or twice. Please don't take it amiss. Both of us are lucky to hear a few telling truths in this day and age. Ancient kings used to employ clowns to keep them amused. It was the clown's job to tell the truth. In a world of falsehood the truth sounds funny. But only on one condition: it must be uttered by a privileged character whose lack of common sense liberates him from the burden of the commonly accepted myths. The neurotic patient has the same privilege. The physician orders him to speak the full truth. The patient does so on the understanding that he will not be punished for it, and that everything remains in the strictest confidence.

Let us be grateful, then,* for the opportunity to learn what we all sometimes think, and to rediscover the validity of an ancient law: The truth does make us free!

Now I leave you to Professor Schuman's story. Light your cigar, fill your tall glass, lean back in your armchair, and bon voyage!

Faithfully yours,

K. D. Foster

BOOK ONE

*Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about
his house, and about all that he hath on every side?*

—The Book of Job.

1

*Listen: and then, in this hour of tedium
Trustfully welcome your good guardian angel,
Yours, who will reinvest you with your childhood.*

—*Les Débâcles.*

I AM RELUCTANT to begin that voyage into the mysterious underworld of repressed memories which, to revive, is to enter the gates of hell. Here I am, in my middle years, wandering through a kind of gloom, deflected from the path I might have normally followed if the world had not gone wild with crime, terror and anarchy; or if I could find my place in the ranks of those who are waging a sacred war for the last best things on earth. Merely to recall what has happened in recent years fills me with a bitterness which I resent and a longing for death which I fear, and for that reason I find it hard to remember at all. I feel sleepy at this moment, and all my senses are weighed down as if they were crushed by some gigantic rock. But I must come to myself, and impel my thought down the steep hill of memory.

You've asked me to say whatever comes into my mind, doctor, however irrational it may seem. I feel you and I have something in common, that our work is similar in certain respects. You dig into a man's soul to ferret out his personal past; I dig into the history of culture to ferret out the past of the human race. We are both inspired by the hope that a real understanding of the past will enable us to decipher the laws of human behavior; and once these are known, man will perhaps be able to master the future and achieve a truly happy civilization.

Possibly this hope is another of those tremendous illusions which have lured, then disappointed humanity in the five thousand years of its recorded history. But only the men of the future will have the right to judge; only they will really know whether and to what extent our age has deceived itself.

Meantime, the great problem remains how to recapture the past; then, how to read it aright, how to decipher the meaning concealed in the event. I know from long experience that it is extremely diffi-

cult to reach that common past of ours which goes by the name of history. Despite all the writings, relics, laws, temples and viaducts, what do we really know about the Romans? It ought to be easier to understand a people that has already vanished from the scene than a people of our own time. Here all is prejudice, there all should be detachment. Yet there are as many Roman histories as historians. Everyone falsifies history, even if it is only his own personal history. Sometimes the falsification is deliberate, sometimes unconscious; but always the past is altered to suit the needs of the present. The best we can say of any account is not that it is the real truth at last, but that this is how the story appears to us now.

I don't know how I got off on this, doctor. All I wanted to say was that even the history of a private episode in an ordinary life is hard to recapture. I wanted to tell you first about the vision which brought me here; but that happened the night before last, and this is already older than the Pyramids. It seems remote, almost unreal, and I would not believe the vision had happened except for the intense feelings which still unnerve me.

These feelings are mixed. There is the terror, and there is still the extraordinary joy the vision evoked. But at this moment the details of what I saw escape me. I do remember the vision came toward dawn. I recognized St. Eusebius and the Roman judge, in spite of everything. The whole drama I had witnessed in that overwhelming illusion—first in the concentration camp, then in the Swiss village—came to a head night before last. It was the last installment of the serial film, the climax of it all. But at this moment I can recall nothing except the rapt face of Eusebius, suffused with a faith so intense, so pure amidst his suffering, that my horror gave way to joy. It was something he said toward the end, I think, which counteracted the agony of his last hours. It filled me with a profound desire to live, the almost unbearable certainty that the misery of men is not wholly in vain. But it is all unclear. Perhaps it will come back later.

The feeling of joy which I recollect from the vision, above all from the last words Eusebius uttered, is now beginning to surge up in me again. I am very happy suddenly, and I think of those far-off days in Vienna when it seemed that the past would flow into the future without catastrophe.

At that time I was teaching the history of Western culture at the university and leading a rather pleasant life. Despite my preoccupation with remote periods of Europe's past, my work did not cut me off from the contemporary world. I saw the present moving in unbroken continuity from the past. On the scale of historic time—as distinguished from personal time—the Western world

began only yesterday. I wanted to understand the past of that world so that I might understand its future; but I also knew that this future must be forged in the present. I followed the newspapers as avidly as illuminated manuscripts; visited art galleries, read current best sellers, attended lectures and saw every new film the moment it came to town.

My professional life was not unsuccessful, and I think I was rather popular with the students. What amused them most was my unusual memory. The Greeks said memory is the mother of the Muses. I've always suspected her favorite daughter is Clio. The amount of detail any historian must remember is prodigious. In my case, it became a kind of intellectual sport to display my memory the way a professional strongman displays his biceps. The method was different, the vanity the same. I can to this day recite whole pages of Plato, Tacitus and Gibbon by heart; and at the university I used to entertain my students—and instruct them, too, I hope—by speaking from memory a complete act from Hamlet or Faust.

Then, too, I am a Viennese, which is to say an amateur musician. My performance on the piano was less than brilliant; but I carried entire musical scores in my head. Sometimes, when I took solitary walks along the Prater or the Kaerntnerstrasse, I would hum to myself passages from Bach, Beethoven and Strauss; or a full movement from the *Symphony Fantastique* of Berlioz. This has always appealed to me as the most melodious statement of the romantic movement, and it thoroughly suits my saturnine temperament.

I have just said that I was a Viennese, as if that were a definite description of a man. Naturally, doctor, you must be acquainted with all the interesting things which have been said about us Viennese. Do you know Victor Adler's famous epigram that imperial Austria was ruled by absolutism tempered by the national Schlamperei? How can one possibly translate Schlamperei? Say laxness, laziness, a kind of slovenliness of the will.

The most piquant things have been said about us; for instance, that because our country mixed and assimilated many races, it absorbed during its long history the characteristics of many peoples. We are said to have a sensitive, civilized balance, combined with a keen sense of realities. We are supposed to know what is worth while doing on this mortal coil—like making love, listening to the *Blue Danube* and devouring Schlagobers. In the old days, we were regarded as experts in the art of living whose gospel was *carpe diem*!

That's the face of the medal. Of course, there's an obverse

side. We are said to be weak, impractical, unreliable. We were never men of action, say those people whose knowledge of our history goes back along the immense vista of twenty whole years; and it is even said that we never admired men of action. To be sure, if you think of men like Prince Metternich, Prince Karl von Schwarzenberg or General Radetzky, there is little to admire; and people whom one would like to admire, like certain leaders of socialist Vienna, were, alas! no men of action.

It is said that whenever possible we try to avoid unpleasant words and deeds; our motto is supposed to be procrastination, our method compromise. Above all, we are supposed to be dreamers who enjoy living in an atmosphere of unreality. One cynic has even used this alleged fact to explain why the modern interpretation of dreams could develop only in Vienna.

Do you know the classic description of the Viennese by the playwright Hermann Bahr? It made quite a sensation in its day, prior to the first World War. It made the Viennese furious, too. At first, that is. There was a hot debate in Parliament about Bahr's book. In the end the government permitted him to publish it, provided he omitted the offending passages. He did, but as a last chapter, he published the parliamentary debate in full; and that, of course, contained all the offending passages. This trick played on the imperial government so amused the Viennese that the book at once became a great success; its insults were accepted as the rarest kind of wit.

That's the Viennese for you; they used to forgive anything for the sake of a good joke. This is what Hermann Bahr had to say: A Viennese is a man unhappy about himself, who hates the Viennese but cannot live without them: who despises himself, but is touched by his own condition: who constantly grumbles but wishes to be constantly praised: who feels miserable but finds comfort in his wretchedness: who always complains, always threatens, but puts up with everything except that anyone should presume to help him: then he defends himself: nowhere in the world is there so much talent as in Vienna: but it is a talent of a special kind—attached to nothing, hanging in the air, a talent with nothing to express but itself, a purposeless void, a hollow nut: here is all the political wisdom, which no man knows how to use: men in Vienna do not lack talent, but talent lacks men: hence the terror of the Viennese when a real man appears among them: the Viennese have never tolerated a real man of real life: they never let such men enter the life of their beloved, soft-living city.

That's what Hermann Bahr said about us. But do you know, doctor? These generalizations are like palmistry. If you talk vaguely

enough, you are bound to hit upon a truth here and there. It's true that after the last war Vienna was full of middle-class dreamers. They walked through life as if time did not exist; spent days and nights chattering in cafés or lying on a summer hillside smiling at a rose-colored cloud. And we were proud, too. We believed Pirandello when he said Vienna was the cultural center of Europe. We also believed we were witnessing the sunset of that culture. O unique, fleeting, beautiful moment! It was like the last days of the Roman Empire. We clung to the past and let the future slip through our fingers.

But here I, too, am playing with vague generalizations. I ought to speak in the first person singular and say bluntly that I certainly was a dreamer. I have avoided saying so until now because that would at once compel me to explain how I contracted the habit of daydreaming in childhood, and I have a great reluctance to discussing my childhood. Eheu fugaces, how times have changed! After the last war, everybody discovered, as if it were the most extraordinary miracle in the world, that he had once been a child; everybody then proceeded to inform the world of that unique fact in the most profuse detail. For three decades we were deluged with poems, novels, plays and autobiographies about childhood. Now, suddenly, the whole subject has become an unspeakable bore. Twenty years from now, when the present-day youngster will be mature, he will have to answer the question *were you ever a child?* with an emphatic *no!* For Europe's little boys and girls have been matured in their swaddling clothes by catastrophes which their grandparents could not imagine. And here in America, too, I see adolescents with a better grasp of realities than many elder statesmen brought up in another, more naïve world. If I speak of my childhood and youth, it will be only in so far as these have some bearing on my dreams and visions. Certainly I ought to say that when I was born on the first day of the first year of the present century, I entered a rather peculiar family.

2

*Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing
it is for the eyes to behold the sun.*

—*Ecclesiastes.*

AT TWENTY-FIVE MY FATHER started out to be a surgeon. Three years later he was seized with the idea of becoming a second Schnitzler. Between operations at the General Hospital, he frequented literary cafés, drafted two chapters of a novel and completed a play. Produced in Budapest, it created a sensation as the worst play of the season and closed after five performances.

My father at once abandoned playwrighting and proposed to the beautiful Anna Hauser, then a rising young light opera singer. On the insistence of the bride's family, devoutly Catholic, the couple was married in St. Stephen's cathedral. Father was rather embarrassed by the ceremony, for he was known around the cafés as a freethinker; but he accepted it as a minor sacrifice on the altar of love. After their marriage his wife quit the stage. She was deeply attached to Father, and, unwilling to leave him for long periods to keep engagements in distant places, canceled her contract and settled down in a comfortable flat in one of the better sections of the city.

It was here that I was born a year later. After various forebears on both sides, I was christened Paul August Heinrich.

By this time, Father was dramatic critic on one of Vienna's leading dailies. As the years went on, he acquired a reputation in theatrical, literary and artistic circles, where the name of Arthur Schuman became one to conjure with. A critic on a big daily is bound to have a good deal of power; besides, my father was something of a personality. People considered him handsome. He was tall and solid, with broad shoulders and long hands; his head was majestic and charming. When I was a boy, his hair was black and thick, his face always clean-shaven and his large blue eyes seemed to shine with a strange, attractive brilliance. Those who wanted to flatter him said he rather resembled Goethe; but without going to such extravagant lengths, there was a magnetic quality about

him which attracted men and women alike. Then, too, he was a fascinating talker, even for Vienna where nearly everyone was a conversationalist.

Mother, on the other hand, rarely talked. She always gave Father her entire attention; and when company came to the house, she would often sit near him, watching his face with love and taking in every word of his with admiration. Sometimes when she yielded to the entreaties of the guests, and sang light opera pieces or *Lieder*, it was chiefly to please my father.

Before the first war, there was nearly always company at night, usually after the theater. Sometimes I would be permitted to stay up late; then I would sit in a corner of the smoke-filled dining room. The guests sat crowded around the table, drank wine, ate sausage, cheese, bread and cake, talked, laughed and argued with the greatest animation. I was an only child; my parents were very fond of me, and those guests who genuinely liked them or wanted to win their favor often spent a few minutes patting my head or talking to me with mock gravity to make me feel grown-up.

In those days, Arthur Schnitzler, my father's old hero, visited us now and then; Hugo von Hofsmannsthal liked to drop in for a cup of coffee; and once, quite unexpectedly, the great Sigmund Freud came and played a game of cards for thirty minutes in absolute silence. There were beautiful actresses, too, with soft Viennese faces, liquid eyes and voluptuous movements; but none of them were as beautiful as Mother, who, in her dignified reserve, seemed to me like an angel. She looked especially beautiful when she sang for the guests, and all the charm and feeling which once used to thrill audiences in the theater filled our home with subdued warmth.

I hated to leave these parties, but no matter how stubbornly I tried to stay, Mother could always make me go to bed.

"Good night, Paul," she would say in her lovely contralto. "It's time to go to your room."

I would rise from my seat in the corner, kiss my father good-night (always impressed by the faint odor of shaving lotion) and bow to the company. I enjoyed hearing the many voices, like an opera chorus, saying: "Good night, Paul! Good night!" My father, whose playwriting ambitions had now declined to remembering odds and ends from various dramas, would sometimes add: "Good night, sweet prince; the flight of angels sing thee to thy rest." Then my mother would accompany me to the door of my room, and kissing me on both cheeks, would say softly, as if uttering a benediction: "Good night, dear son. . . . Sleep well." The last thing I would see before retiring was her slim, graceful figure; the tender

smile on her pale, oval face; and the warm love in her brown eyes.

When I was fourteen, and already well advanced in school, my parents used to take me to dinner in restaurants and cafés. Here I heard those sweet, interminable Viennese waltzes and the melancholy plaint of gypsy music; but since I was now studying the piano, my parents occasionally took me to concerts, and one of my earliest memories is the new music of Schoenberg played by the maestro himself.

Saturday nights our house was especially crowded with guests. These days they often spoke about the Balkan Wars raging in the southeast of our turbulent continent; but no matter what the topic of conversation, I felt exalted in the illusion that I understood every word of it. While our blond and buxom Marta would hustle and bustle around the large dining table, setting down vast plates of food, fresh bottles of wine and steaming pots of coffee, the guests argued with brilliance and heat about the new renaissance which they agreed was sweeping Europe. According to my father's friends, there was a resurgence of creative energy in all the arts and sciences. They talked about men already immortal though still living: Tolstoy, Shaw, Anatole France; and about new figures rising high on the European horizon. One guest, just returned from Paris, predicted a remarkable future for a painter named Picasso, and thereby precipitated a parlor-war on the subject of Cubism; another tried, with great difficulty, to describe the plastic innovations of the Dutch genius Mondrian; a third praised the indescribably divine dancing of Nijinsky; a fourth insisted that a complete revolution in human thought would be brought about by the new mathematical theories of Henri Poincaré; a fifth attributed the power of transforming the whole of human life to the new science of psychoanalysis, founded in our own beloved Vienna. One or two visitors talked with awe of a man named Einstein and his theory of relativity, which they admitted they could not understand; others talked of the new chemistry, the new atomic theory, the new concept of matter. Then, of course, there was endless talk of the new theater in Budapest, Berlin, Dublin and Moscow; the new music of Honneger, Respighi and Ravel; the new poetry of Stefan George.

A strange, irritated guest at some of these parties was my uncle Peter Hauser. He was a thin little man, with keen gray eyes and a sharp face, who worked in the National Library. He kept his walrus mustache well-combed, and his addiction to good food and wine gave him a high color and a round little belly which protruded comically from his spare frame. Uncle Peter adored my mother as only a confirmed bachelor can adore a beautiful sister.

It was for her sake that he was occasionally invited to the house, for there was little love lost between Father and Uncle Peter. The latter, a devout Catholic, had objected to his sister's marrying "a freethinker, a Mason and a downright infidel." This my father never forgave him, especially since he did not like Uncle Peter's views, and called him a "superstitious relic of the Middle Ages."

At some of our Saturday night parties, Uncle Peter would sit in the corner near me, listen to the Babel of argument and drop caustic remarks in an undertone. He would puff hard at his pipe, stroke his walrus mustache and grumble through clouds of smoke:

"Ah, they've found salvation at last. . . . It's all in the magic word *new*!"

A monarchist and clerical, Uncle Peter was especially irritated because he knew that sometimes, after most of the guests had left and a few intimate friends sat down with Father around a fresh bottle of wine, there was even talk about a "new society."

The fact is, my father had begun calling himself a socialist. I doubt whether he belonged to any political party; more likely dramatic criticism had led him from a consideration of social problems as presented in the theater to a consideration of social problems as they appeared in real life. His views on the evils of the old order and the marvels of the new were abstract and for the most part, I suspect, a tribute to a prevailing literary fashion. But my father was an eloquent man; when he denounced the evils of "child labor, imperialist exploitation, poverty, inequality and war," my young heart trembled with a nameless fear and hatred for the prevailing world. On the other hand, his glowing pictures of the future classless society filled me with a wonderful sense of hope and longing, though if anyone had asked me what it was I longed for, I would have had a hard time explaining.

While my parents loved me, they neglected me a great deal, too. Father had to write an article a day for his paper, but into that one piece went months of the most complex social life and all the intricate intrigues of the theater and the literary cafés. I did not see him all day; at night I saw him sometimes only after the theater. Mother had little life outside of her husband's; all her time and attention were devoted to furthering and sharing Father's career. Even in the summertime, when we went to the Semmering mountain in the eastern Alps for our vacation, my parents were busy entertaining friends and placating enemies. They were a wonderfully devoted couple; as I look back on them today, I think they are to be envied; but as a child I sometimes secretly resented their neglect. I will not be angry, doctor, if you tell me that I was somewhat jealous of my father.

On those lonely afternoons when my parents were away, I had a choice of browsing in my father's library, full of wonderful books over which I could dream; or going into the kitchen to keep the maid company.

Marta was then about twenty-five, short, stocky and healthy. She had flaxen hair, blue eyes and pink cheeks; now that I was launched on adolescence I did not fail to notice she also had a considerable bosom and that her rear trembled when she walked. At first I used to go to the kitchen to take advantage of Marta's good nature in regard to cookies or bread and butter thickly spread with jam. After winning my heart that way, Marta had no trouble appealing to my mind; she was a talkative Czech peasant with plenty to complain of. I loved to hear her talk; she mangled our language in a most original manner, but spoke it fluently with many robust turns of phrase.

These made me laugh, but the net effect of Marta's conversation was to fill me with pity. When she poured out the sufferings of her people under the empire, it was enough to melt a stone, let alone an adolescent heart. Then the sufferings of the peasants! What a life! Her poor, aging parents slaved from dawn to dusk on their little farm, and it was all taxes and no bread. Finally, she had a brother who had come to work in a Vienna factory and lived in a basement below the street, slept in a moldy bed and wrestled all night with vermin the size of dragons.

Marta's complaints lent poignant meaning to Father's social theories; in giving me a kind of maternal love for which I was grateful, she won my love for oppressed peoples and classes. I felt sorry for the gulf which separated Marta from our guests. Why should one human being be compelled to serve another? Any form of servitude seemed to me the most awful thing in the world; and just as awful was the attitude of those who ordered servants around. I used to suffer when my parents took me to a restaurant or café, because the waiters had to smirk, shuffle and bow to their fellow beings. When I grow up, I said to myself, I shall be neither servant nor master. By that time—who knows?—the bright equality my father wanted might arrive.

When I talked socialism to Marta, she only laughed. Marta had a simple remedy for everything; she was profoundly religious, and in every crisis found the answer in the Bible. She was a Protestant who believed that the Trinity consisted of Father, Son and John Huss. Apart from her complaints about the real troubles which oppressed her family, she was often filled with fantastic forebodings about the immediate future. She insisted we were destined to experience the Apocalypse.

This led to a peculiar turning point in my life.

One afternoon, late in the spring, I was coming home from school with my two friends, Oscar von Teplitz and Theodore Hoffman. Oscar came from a distinguished family; his father was a count, one uncle was a banker, another a lawyer, a third a high police official. Theodore was the son of a well-known labor leader. We three were practically inseparable at school. This particular afternoon we were happy because the sun was shining, the spring air like wine, the summer vacation near at hand. Soon there would be no more classes, our families would take us to the Semmering and we would swim naked in the cool waters.

We were walking down the street, laughing and talking, when we suddenly heard the noise of a scuffle. There on the street corner nearest the schoolhouse, three boys were beating a fourth. We ran to the spot as fast as we could. The victim, a frail boy with curly black hair, lay prone on the ground, and his tormentors were kicking him.

"Here, you swine!" Oscar shouted. "Why don't you fight like men, one at a time?"

"Mind your damned business," one of the boys snapped. The victim lay on the ground, his eyes closed, his mouth bleeding slowly. The husky tormentor dug his toe into the boy's ribs and said: "The dirty Jew!"

"Oh," said Oscar. He shrugged his shoulder and turned to go.

Why beat a boy because he's a Jew? What difference does race or religion make?

"Let him alone!" I shouted, and leaned over to help the Jewish boy up.

Without warning, a fist crashed into my eye. When I recovered my balance, Oscar and Teddy were punching two of the enemy; the third was chasing the Jewish boy down the street. I started after them, made a flying leap at the assailant and brought him to the ground. We rolled down the street; then he was on top of me, pummeling my face. At this moment, Oscar and Teddy, who had driven off the other two boys, came to my rescue. My opponent jumped to his feet and ran away. I got up, took out my handkerchief and began to wipe the blood from my nose. The Jewish boy stood pale and disheveled, watching me with immense liquid black eyes.

"Thank you," he said quietly. "My name is Siegfried Gross."

We shook hands.

"My name is Paul Schuman," I said. "This is Oscar von Teplitz; this is Teddy Hoffman. I know a Professor Gross who comes to visit my father. He teaches at the university."

"That's my father!" Siegfried said.

"Visit me sometime, won't you?" I said, and gave Siegfried my address.

We all shook hands again, and I started for home. On the way I became very depressed, and it wasn't all due to the pain in my nose and under my swelling eye. The beating of Siegfried was an unexpected shock. I could not understand why one human being should persecute another; the thought of it made me sick.

My nose began to bleed again. I leaned my head far back to stop the flow. How bright and beautiful was the sun.

3

Christ himself was poor. . . . And as He was himself, so He informed his apostles and disciples, they were all poor, prophets poor, apostles poor.

—*Anatomy of Melancholy.*

WHEN I ARRIVED HOME, my mother had her new toque on, ready to go out.

"Good heavens!" she cried, seeing my condition. "You're hurt, Paul."

"I'm all right," I said. "It's just a nosebleed."

I had made up my mind to say nothing about the fight.

"And here I am late for an appointment," Mother said. Her face looked lovely and anxious under her blue tulle veil. "O dear, what shall I do? I promised to meet your uncle at the optician's." She stood there, visibly torn between two decisions, two loves. What do we mean when we say we are loved? Among other things, that someone can see the world a little through our eyes; and that, for a brief flash, they feel it with our feelings. At this moment my mother felt Uncle Peter's need and mine with equal intensity, and could not act at all.

"Go ahead, mother," I said. "Marta will take care of me."

"Yes, of course—Marta," Mother said, relieved. "Here, Marta . . . Marta!" The maid appeared in the doorway of the kitchen. "Marta, dear, see what you can do for Paul. His nose is bleeding. I've got to run along, but I'll be back soon."

She kissed me on the forehead and hurried out.

Marta led me into the kitchen, took my wet, bloodstained handkerchief away and examined my face.

"Hmm," she grumbled. "Scheiskerl. You've been fighting." Then she grinned and added in her funny Czech accent: "A man who wants to fight should learn to win." I liked that; it made me feel manly. "Come here, Schlemiel," Marta said. She took me to the sink, carefully washed my face and applied iodine to the cuts. I squirmed under the astringent.

"Stand still!" Marta ordered, dabbing my face. "Were you scared when the other fellow hit you?" I did not answer. "Sure

you were scared," Marta went on. "That's what courage is, to be scared and to fight just the same. Do you know the story of Jan the Plowboy? No, you don't. Well, close your eye while I wash it, please. The emperor wanted to know which of his subject races was the bravest. So he lined up an Austrian, a Hungarian, a Serb, a Croat and a Czech behind a row of cannon facing the enemy. The Czech was a skinny little peasant from our village named Jan the Plowboy. . . . Here, stand still! How can I fix your face when you squirm like an eel? . . . Well, all those fellows were standing there behind the cannon when the enemy began to shoot. There was a terrible noise and when the smoke cleared, lo and behold! all the fellows had run away except Jan the Plowboy. The emperor was surprised; unfortunately, his Imperial Majesty doesn't half appreciate us Czechs, though I must say that anyone seeing a pasty-faced, skinny little runt like Jan would be surprised. . . . Hold still, I said. . . . That's better. . . . Now you're as good as new. Well, the emperor came to Jan and said, 'My boy, you are a great hero. Everyone ran away from the enemy's fire, but you stood your ground like a man. I'd like to reward you for your valor. Name anything you want and you shall have it.'—'Anything?' said Jan—'Anything at all,' his Imperial Majesty said.—'Then, sire,' said Jan, 'I'd like to have a clean pair of pants.' Marta laughed heartily at her own joke. Then she spread some butter and jam on a thick, white slice of bread and filled a glass full of milk. "Eat, hero," she said. "Eat and grow strong. Soon you'll need all the strength you can get."

Her eyes became grave as if she saw some doom approaching.

"Why will I mmm . . . mmm. . . ." I managed to ask through a mouthful of bread and jam.

"A great catastrophe is coming upon us," Marta said. "There will be a lot of blood, many dead, the cities will rise in flames against the sky."

"Why don't you get married, Marta?" I said. At the Gymnasium the boys were beginning to learn the facts of life, though only theoretically. "Then you won't have such awful nightmares."

"Nightmares," Marta mimicked. "Listen, my hero with the swollen nose, and see who has nightmares."

Quickly she opened a drawer in the kitchen table and took out a Bible. She turned to the end of the book, glanced at me queerly and began reading in a low voice:

"And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see. And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and

he went forth conquering, and to conquer. And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword."

I felt tired and lonely. Marta's reading created a trance from which I could not extricate myself. She bent her head low over the book and went on hypnotically:

"And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine."

Marta stopped for a moment. Someone had opened the door of our flat. Could they have come back already? Mother had returned to me. I listened carefully and heard Mother saying, in that wonderful, caressing voice of hers:

"Come in, Peter. Do stay. I want to talk to you."

The door closed and I could hear them moving about in the dining room. She had forgotten me, after all.

"Read some more, Marta," I said.

Marta bent her head and went on in a lowered voice:

"And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth."

"Marta," came Mother's voice gaily, "will you make some coffee, please?"

"Yes, gnaedige Frau," Marta said without moving from her seat.

"Where is Paul?" said Mother's voice. "Is he all right?"

"I'm fine," I shouted back.

"Paul is in the kitchen," Mother's voice said. "Make yourself at home, Peter. I'll join you in a moment."

Marta glanced up with a faraway look in her eyes, then turned to the Bible in her hand and read rapidly:

"And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge

our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled."

Someone coughed. Completely absorbed, Marta kept her eyes fixed on the sacred volume in her hand. I looked up and saw Uncle Peter standing in the doorway of the kitchen, pale, sharp-eyed, furious. He held a smoking pipe in his hand, and under the walrus mustache his lips started to twitch. He opened them to say something, but apparently thought better of it as Marta, oblivious to everything around her, started to read again:

"And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places."

My uncle, standing motionless in the doorway, coughed nervously again but said nothing, as Marta went on:

"And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb."

Marta closed the Book and her eyes at the same time, and speaking from memory concluded in a voice barely audible, as if communing with herself:

"For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"

The silence that followed was full of awe. Then Uncle Peter, striding in from the doorway and waving his pipe wildly, shouted to Marta:

"Enough, heretic! There is absolutely no need for you to ensnare this boy's soul!"

Marta stood up slowly with dignity.

"I'll have the coffee ready in a minute, sir," she said, and walked to the stove.

"Come with me, Paul," my uncle said.

I had never seen him so upset. I followed him into the dining room. My mother had already set the table and was waiting for us.

"What kept you so long, Peter?" she said, smiling. "Don't tell me Marta has begun to fascinate you."

"Never mind that," Uncle Peter said so sharply that Mother looked up in surprise. "She's breaking down your son's soul."

"At any rate," Mother said, smiling again, "she has patched up his face."

"That's right," said Uncle Peter. "Joke about matters of life and death. Your infidel Arthur would enjoy *that*. Do you realize that while you two Freemasons are neglecting the boy's religious education, your Hussite servant is teaching him heresy?"

"Sit down, Peter," said Mother kindly. "And you, too, Paul." I sat down at the table and began to nibble a delicious piece of pastry. My uncle roughly pulled up a chair and sat down with a bang. "What heresy is Marta teaching you, my son?" Mother said.

"She isn't teaching me anything," I replied. "She only said that a great catastrophe will soon overwhelm the world, and she read me from the Bible."

"There you are!" said Uncle Peter, with bitter triumph. "Who is she to read the Bible in the first place? That sacred tome is not for the likes of her. And who is she to interpret it? And to a mere child at that!"

"I am not a child," I said with as much dignity as I could muster.

"How is your nose?" Mother asked softly.

I felt it. Certainly, it was swollen.

"You look tired, my son," said Mother. "Hadn't you better take a nap? It will do you good."

I *was* tired. Taking another piece of pastry in my hand, I started for my room. Mother accompanied me to the door.

"Sleep well, my son," she said, kissing me.

I stretched out on the bed in my clothes and fell asleep at once. The dream I had stands out vividly in my mind to this day. In this dream, we were having our summer vacation high up on the Semmering. I was walking in a wide, deserted meadow under the clear skies. Suddenly there was a great earthquake and the sun became red as blood. I heard a loud cry; and there, at my feet, two boys were rolling on the ground in furious combat. They were my friends Oscar and Teddy. Above them, whinnying in wild fright, their forelegs reared high in the air, rose four horses, red, white, black and dapple. Oscar was above Teddy, his knee in the other boy's chest; he raised his hand swiftly; it held a sharp rock which the young aristocrat was about to bring down on the labor leader's son. Now I noticed for the first time, lying prone in the grass the figure of Siegfried Gross. His finely chiseled Jewish face was white as a

death-mask. I started to cry out, and woke to hear myself saying: "Mother! Mother!" I sat up in bed, frightened, sweat pouring down the back of my neck. The door opened and Marta poked her head in.

"What is it, Paul?" she said. Then she grinned. "Now who is having nightmares? Why don't *you* get married?" I laughed, relieved. "Go to sleep," Marta said. "And the next time you fight, be sure to guard your nose."

She closed the door softly behind her.

4

*One in whom persuasion and belief
Had ripened into faith, and faith become
A passionate intuition.*

—*The Excursion.*

THE FOLLOWING SUNDAY, at about eleven o'clock in the morning, Uncle Peter made an unexpected call at our house. He asked me whether I would like to go for a walk with him. I said yes. My parents consented at once; they were expecting guests at noon, and were glad to get me out of the house.

It was a wonderful spring day, and the sights along the Kaertnerstrasse were exciting. The crowd was flowing along both sides of the boulevard; men were raising their hats to each other, bowing to the ladies, kissing their hands or merely murmuring the traditional "Kuess die Hand, gnaedige Frau." The faces of the women were wreathed in smiles, and the children walked with exaggerated dignity in their Sunday clothes. Putting his hand on my shoulder, Uncle Peter said cautiously:

"You don't believe, do you?"

"Father is a freethinker, you know," I said, evading his question. I did not want to hurt him; I was very fond of my uncle; and at this moment, when I wished I were walking with my parents, like the other children along the boulevard, I felt grateful to him.

"Would you mind coming with me to St. Stephen's cathedral?" Uncle Peter said. "I'd like very much to attend the late Mass. You won't have to do a thing except wait for me."

My parents had never taken me to St. Stephen's; I had seen that venerable Gothic structure only from the outside.

"You can take me anywhere you like, uncle," I said.

We walked down to the end of the Kaertnerstrasse and entered St. Stephen's. The seats were slowly filling up for noon Mass.

"Come, I'll show you something," said Uncle Peter.

We climbed the winding stairs to the watchtower, and through its four narrow windows looked out upon the beautiful city which spread below us like an imagined panorama.

"What a wonderful tower!" I said.

"It's an observation point now mostly for English and Rumanian tourists," my uncle said. "But twice in our history it was literally the watchtower of Christian Europe. Once when the Turks besieged the city . . ."

"I know, I know! We learned it at school," I said. "In 1529. And again in 1683."

"You remember dates, I see," Uncle Peter said. "That second siege was truly desperate. The starving people of Vienna were on the point of surrendering. Do you know who saved them?"

"John Sobieski, King of Poland," I said.

"Yes," said Uncle Peter. "The great Slav ruler, sweeping down from the north, drove the infidel out through Hungary back to his own country. Did you ever come across the speech which John Sobieski made to his troops just before the battle?"

"No."

"Well," said Uncle Peter, "the great Slav leader had a fine sense of the interdependence of the world to be saved. He said to his men: 'We are also defending Warsaw and Cracow and the whole of Christendom, of which this city is a bulwark.' Next day, after the great victory, the people of Vienna gathered in this cathedral and sang a *Te Deum* voicing the relief and joy of all Europe."

There floated up to us the song of the choir opening the Mass. We went down the winding stairs into the cathedral and sat in the rear of the center row. As my eyes became accustomed to the darkness, I perceived the high vaults whose tracery rose above the nave and the aisles. Through the unornamented columns, I looked far down the length of the nave. Behind the wrought-iron grille screening the choir, sweet voices seemed to come from far away, as if from heaven itself. The church was suffused with the colored points of light filtered through the stained-glass windows mellow with the centuries. Looking over the heads of the communicants, I strained my eyes to decipher the details at the altar.

"On the black marble of that high altar," my uncle whispered in my ear, "there is carved the stoning of St. Stephen."

An image of the Virgin stood on the altar, and a jeweled copy of it hung at the side of the choir screen. The choir had stopped singing, and the priest, impressive in his vestments, began to intone the Mass. The ritual, which my parents had sedulously avoided for me, appeared profoundly mysterious, but that very mystery made my heart beat fast; and the ancient Latin tongue, which I had so far read only in the restrained account of Caesar's wars and the secular rhetoric of Cicero, now came alive amidst the everyday surroundings

of this twentieth century metropolis and seemed to link us all in an unbroken bond with the remote past. Untouched by the faith, I was deeply moved by the art of the church.

When we got home, we found my parents at table with a number of guests. Mother welcomed me with a kiss, and set down some food for Uncle Peter and myself. Father smiled and said:

"Did you have a nice walk, my son?"

"Yes, father. We went to St. Stephen's to hear Mass."

My father glanced sharply at Uncle Peter, who appeared busy cleaning his pipe. Then Father turned to the guests and they went on with their conversation. The talk was about the new Balkan crisis, Serb nationalist propaganda, the armaments race, the possibilities of a major war. I remember that Father and Professor Gross, who taught history at the university, got into a heated argument about something, and my father said with a smile:

"That's the way it is, my dear Aaron; your very profession prevents you from foreseeing the future of Europe; for some men make history, some write it, and some merely teach it."

It struck me as strange that my father smiled so kindly as he uttered this malicious paradox. It was even more strange that all the guests laughed at it; and most strange of all was that Professor Gross, a man with a shrewd face lined with thought and a little round beard, laughed at his own expense heartily. To this day, the veiled aggression which assaults its victim with a joke makes me feel a lonely outsider.

The party broke up late in the afternoon. As the guests started to go, my father placed his hand on Uncle Peter's arm and said:

"Stay, Peter. I want to talk to you." Then, turning to me, he added: "You, too, Paul."

There were four of us now around the table—Mother, Father, Uncle Peter and myself. But Father addressed himself only to Mother.

"Anna," he said thoughtfully, lighting a cigarette, "I'm afraid we've been neglecting our son. One can't leave everything to school-teachers, especially under a dying medieval empire run by depraved aristocrats, military dandies and, if I may say so—" here Father turned to Uncle Peter for the first time—"by the most dangerous people of all, the clerical hierarchy."

"Just a moment, please!" Uncle Peter said, puffing at his pipe. "You didn't ask me to stay for one of your political discourses, did you? If so, you can spare yourself the trouble. Unfortunately, I'll never convince you; and fortunately, you can't ever convince me." His walrus mustache began to tremble with rage, but he kept his

voice down to a low, ironic level. "You petty Voltaires are so intoxicated with your empty phrases that nothing can save you from damnation. Be damned, then."

"I'm not concerned with my soul," Father said, "or with your mind. I'm concerned about my son. Anna and I have never preached anything to Paul. We are letting him strictly alone. Let him learn and think for himself; let him find his own faith in life."

"To be sure," Uncle Peter said. "The *new* education which is as old as Satan."

"We are letting Paul strictly alone," Father repeated firmly, "and we expect you to do the same. He will have to live in the twentieth century, and we won't have him saddled with superstitions of the twelfth."

"Naturally," Uncle Peter said, grinning. His voice was so sharp with irony that Mother, torn by her love for both men, turned from one to the other with appealing eyes.

"Please, Arthur," she said. "Please, Peter."

I enjoyed the argument hugely; it was vague enough to sound important, and I was the center of it.

"Of course," Uncle Peter continued in a more diplomatic tone of voice, "the wisdom of Rome is bad for your son. What he really needs is the profound theology of your Czech servant girl, who reads him choice passages from the Bible."

Father rose from his chair slowly and crushed his cigarette in the ash tray.

"Marta has already been spoken to," he said, "and she understands. Now we are speaking to you, Peter. If you wish to come to this house, you will refrain from talking theology with my son."

Uncle Peter rose, too. He knocked his pipe ashes into the tray with great deliberation, put his pipe in his pocket, picked up his hat and said:

"A very pleasant day to you, Anna. A very pleasant day to you, my dear Arthur." Then he turned to me and winked solemnly. "Good-bye, Paul," he said. "If you ever get lonely, come to see me. You'll find me at the Library every afternoon."

Mother followed him to the door, and I could not hear what they said to each other. Father put his hand on my shoulder gently, patted it several times and said:

"Come with me, my son."

He took me into his private library, a large, sunlit room crowded with books. Three or four volumes which I had been reading lay scattered in various parts of the room. One of them lay open on the floor, face down. I rushed to pick it up and heard my father laughing softly.

"Have you been reading my books?" he said.

"Yes, father," I said anxiously.

"That's fine," he said. Walking over to a bookcase, he picked out a volume and handed it to me. "Have you ever read this one?" It was Haeckel's *Riddle of the Universe*. I had not read that one. "Well, begin with this," Father said. "Later we'll talk about it."

We never had a chance to discuss that book. Within a few weeks, the world war broke out, and at fourteen nobody could have convinced me that Marta did not have the gift of prophetic vision.

5

*He dreamed of nothing but worshipping her,
Of giving her his whole soul to breathe.*

—Les Moines

WE SPENT THE SUMMER on the Semmering as usual, but the vacation was clouded with anxiety. The winter in town was even worse, because we had already begun to feel the effects of the war, for which Europe was psychologically unprepared. It is difficult now to reconstruct just what Europeans, after decades of an illusory peace, expected the conflict to be like, but there were no statesmen in those days with the wisdom, candor and courage to tell the peoples that war, under any circumstances, means blood, sweat and tears.

In the spring of the following year, Father was called to the colors. Mother and I accompanied him to the railway station. It was full of dirty, dilapidated soldiers. I nearly fell over one of them who was sleeping on the floor. The men wore soiled gray overcoats and torn breeches. Their wounds were covered with filthy bandages that once must have been white. A legless soldier grimly swung himself between two crutches through the crowd, his trousers pinned high around his stumps. The officers who strutted around the station were well-dressed. A woman was saying good-bye to a colonel of Hussars in a red and blue uniform with a lot of gold braid, and a muff over his left hand. He bent over the woman's fingers with a silly smirk on his effeminate face, and his big sabre clanked against the floor. Somewhere a brass band was playing a martial tune.

At the entrance to his car, Father turned to us. First he embraced Mother and kissed her again and again, on the lips, the cheeks, the forehead, murmuring, "Auf Wiedersehen, my angel, we shall see each other soon." Then he turned to me and, pressing me to his chest, kissed me several times without a word. There were tears in his eyes, and I could not keep from crying. He patted me on the shoulder and smiled to cheer me up. Then he said:

"I've seen the passages you've marked in *The Riddle of the Universe*. I've left you a message in the book. Look for it on the fly-leaf." The train started to move, "Good-bye, son, good-bye, Anna."

Waving his hand he leaped to the steps of the slowly moving car disappeared into the corridor and a moment later put his head out an open window. He kept waving to us until the train vanished from view.

All the way home Mother and I did not speak. I felt as if the earth had crashed under my feet; the world was a great void, endlessly gray; my heart was tight and withered with pain. Until that moment I had no real idea how much I loved my father.

When we got home, my mother kissed me silently, holding me a long time in her arms, and I could feel her warm tears dropping on my head. Then she retired to her room, and did not come out till the next morning.

I went to Father's library, sat in his favorite armchair and thought for a long time without thinking. From the end of the corridor I could hear my mother's plaintive voice singing Schubert's music to Heine's poem about the beautiful month of May. At last I came out of my reverie and picked up *The Riddle of the Universe*. Turning to the flyleaf, I found my father's message—a list of books to read: *Quo Vadis*, *Don Quixote*, a well-known volume of the period called *Forerunners of Socialism*, and a little dark-green book on *The World's Revolutions*; quite a long list. I don't remember most of it now.

I began to devour books indiscriminately. I liked especially to read history, which for me was rapidly becoming the most exciting kind of poetry. What was I? A young knight of La Mancha absorbing the political romances of the nineteenth century. I think it was at this time that I crossed the threshold into those dreamlike memories of the past which seem actual because they deal with persons and events which had once existed.

These days a curious change came over my mother, too. She, who had always appeared so helpless and dependent on my father, now revealed an unsuspected strength of character. There were lines of determination on her lovely face, and she went about her work briskly, firmly. Soon my mother volunteered her services as a nurse in one of the hospitals, and I began to see her infrequently. She was gone from the house, usually, before I awoke and did not return until after I was asleep. Mostly I saw her on Sundays. These days she was dressed simply and smiled rarely. We had few visitors, though Uncle Peter came every Sunday for dinner. Most of my father's friends were away at the front or doing war work in the city. The house was lonely and quiet.

Marta ran the household as best she could with rising prices and declining food supplies, and gave me that atmosphere of affection which I craved. But soon she disappeared from my life. A corporal

invalided from the front with a pension met her at a café, laid siege to her heart with relentless generalship for two months, married her first in a civil, then, upon her insistence, in a religious ceremony, and took her away to his home town near Innsbruck. For weeks I was disconsolate at her loss. Into her abandonment I poured all the secret resentment I felt against my parents for leaving me, though my reason told me that they could not help it. Marta's marriage appeared as an unpardonable betrayal. The arrival of a new maid did not mend matters. She was an old woman with a wrinkled face, black teeth and a sour temper, who liked to be left alone, a desire I was only too glad to accommodate.

That was how I came to see Uncle Peter so frequently. I used to visit him in his little corner at the National Library where he worked, and sometimes accompanied him to St. Stephen's. He was very kind to me, and in a world torn by hatred that kindness seemed very precious. His interest in my salvation coincided with my longing to be loved without being abandoned, above all to give my heart to someone who would not break it, who would be there to be loved forever and ever. For a brief period I sought solace in St. Stephen's. Several times I went alone to the cathedral, walked up the long aisles through the austere gloom, stopped humbly at the side of the choir screen and knelt before the jeweled image of the Madonna. Then that strange peace would descend upon my whole being which a great French poet has described so well. Do you know the famous passage at all, doctor? "There existed, then, in the place of happiness, still greater joys—another love beyond all loves, without pause and without end, one that would grow eternally . . ."

Alas, that state of grace did not last long. It succumbed to my incurable passion for things terrestrial, above all for people. After the first stages of exaltation wore away, my eyes would wander from the sacred image to the groups of men and women in various parts of the cathedral, kneeling under the candles which made small arcs of light in the impressive gloom. Some were poorly dressed; many wore black, even those whose cloth was obviously expensive; all had pale, anxious faces. Here, too, with the Prince of Peace looking down upon us, the war was present like an endless nightmare. I wondered about those people and their troubles, and often said to myself: You have been born into a time of great losses.

When I stopped going to church, I would retire to my father's library and read the copy of the Bible which Marta had left me. Vaguely oppressed by a universal catastrophe whose meaning I did not understand but whose terror haunted me, I liked at first to go over the somber passages of Job. Their complaints and accusations seemed to voice the agony of the world about me. Later the melan-

choly mood passed, and I felt exalted by the call of the prophets for justice. I suppose, doctor, you will eventually explain in some neat formula why a boy from a pleasant middle-class home should so keenly feel the inequalities and injustices that abound everywhere, the real truth about which he could not possibly know at this time. Still, I do not see how anyone can read the prophets without being lifted above the dull acceptance of evil. Where in the ancient world was there an ethic as lofty as theirs? Lines that impressed me then rise to my mind now: For I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins; they afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right. . . . Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live . . . Hate the evil and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate. . . . Let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.

Apart from the time I spent in the library, there were pleasant afternoons and evenings with my friends Oscar von Teplitz, Theodore Hoffman and Siegfried Gross. In the fourth year of the war, when we had already entered the university, we were particularly chummy. It was that curious age when you take the world with the earnestness of a student and in ten minutes play like a child. Walking along the campus on a cold December day, we would be arguing the relative merits of Goethe and Schiller one minute, and the next divide into teams of two for a snowball fight. By this time Oscar, who was older than the rest of us by two years, fancied himself a painter; he did bad, imitative landscapes, liked to drop in at bohemian cafés, and pretended to despise the nobility from which he had sprung. Teddy, who was short, broad-shouldered and grave of countenance, used to smile at this; he had a peculiar pride in his own class, which he was sure was going to inherit the earth, and he never argued the point with us. The pride was in every gesture of his, in the quiet way he smiled, in the assurance with which he used to organize our escapades. Teddy was always fundamentally serious, Oscar incurably frivolous. The labor leader's son sometimes reproved the scion of medieval princes—so anxious to step out of his class into the glamorous world of creative art—with being insensitive to the war and all it meant.

"Don't chatter so much," Teddy would say to the count's son. "Your mind is rapidly becoming an insufferable luxury in a time of universal want."

The strangest of the group, however, was Siegfried. His sensitive, pale face was always alive. On subjects which interested him, like mathematics, physics and psychoanalysis, he could be very thoughtful and even original; but he had a strange, self-deprecating humor and a fund of anecdotes about his own race, which he said

was neither a race nor a nation nor a people, and which he insisted would be assimilated in a few decades by the surrounding world. His greatest desire seemed to be to get as far away from his origins as possible and to acquire all the earmarks of a conservative Austrian. Often the very characteristics for which he was most anxious to be praised were precisely those which we, who by heritage "belonged," considered outmoded and stupid. Oscar's pride in being liberal enough to have a Jew among his friends was nothing compared with Siegfried's irritating gratitude at being accepted as an equal by a count's son.

Once Oscar gave us a party at his house, in which he was apparently granted a great deal of liberty. I had never before seen such a palatial place. There were vast rooms through which you passed on rich carpets; the menservants wore livery; the ceilings gleamed brightly with immense chandeliers from which artificial light poured down majestically. There were five or six of us that Saturday night, all students from the university, seated around the dinner table. We felt very grown-up smoking cigarettes and drinking wine, an art at which Oscar was already expert. He also entertained us with tales of his erotic adventures, which at twenty included one of his mother's maids and two of her married friends. After that we talked gravely about the war, and wondered what would be the effect of America's entrance into the world conflict and the Bolshevik revolution which was now about a month old. We wondered, too, when we would be called to the army; they were rapidly getting down to our class.

Toward midnight we heard a girl's rather high-pitched voice, clear and vibrant, speaking to the servant in the corridor.

"Help me off with my coat, will you? . . . No, don't bother to tell Oscar."

The voice pealed out in gay laughter; and now in the doorway there stood a young woman smoking a cigarette. Her jade-green evening gown enhanced a thin, supple figure; the head was strikingly golden; electric blue eyes surveyed us all boldly; deep red lips curved in an ambiguous smile.

Oscar frowned. Without getting up, he waved his hand toward the newcomer.

"My sister Helga," he said.

As we all arose to acknowledge the introduction, I caught sight of the strange expression on Siegfried's face. There was something in his attitude of subdued excitement and awe, as if he were a commoner meeting a queen. To tell the truth, I was unaccountably attracted to Helga myself, but did not know what to say or do.

"It is indeed a great pleasure and privilege to make your acquaintance," I heard Siegfried's voice saying.

Helga did not seem to notice either his excitement or my paralysis; she was not looking at any one of us, but at all of us as a group, like an actress on the stage.

"May I sit down?" she said to Oscar.

Before he could reply, she took a seat and we followed her example stiffly. At once Helga launched into a rapid monologue in her lovely, rather high-pitched voice, which emphasized so many words that one could not be certain what it was that interested her most.

"O Oscar, *dear!* You *should* have come with us to the *theater*," she cried, folding her hands in a conscious gesture of grace. "You have no idea what you've *missed*. It was *divine*, simply *heavenly!*"

Siegfried watched her with burning black eyes, his face paler than usual, his lips parted. But Helga paid no attention to him. To my astonishment, she looked straight at me, and her smile was sheer enchantment.

"And the leading *lady!*" she cried in ecstasy. "*She* was simply *divine*. Not to mention the direction. Reinhardt is a *genius*, I tell you, *pure genius!* I'm going to act for him someday. You just wait and *see*, Oscar." Though she now addressed her brother, she kept looking at me. "The family will be proud of me *yet*. Think of it, Helga von Teplitz, the *Bernhardt* of *Vienna!* Can't you see it in all the *papers?* . . . Oh, Mr. Schuman—" she leaned forward and looked straight into my eyes, blinking hers so that her long lashes flapped like the wings of a tiny bird—"You are Mr. Schuman, aren't you? Oscar tells me your father is the famous *dramatic* critic. Isn't that wonderful? How fortunate you *are!* I'm sure you go to the theater *every night!*" Before I could reply that I seldom went to the theater, Helga rattled on: "I'm sure the most *wonderful* people come to your house! Has Schnitzler been there? *There's* a genius for you. I'd love to meet him. Couldn't you arrange it, Mr. Schuman?"

"I know, I know," Oscar managed to interrupt her. "The world is full of geniuses and you've got to know every one of them. Now will you have the goodness, Fräulein von Teplitz, to leave us gentlemen alone?"

A look of pain flashed across Siegfried's face.

"Very well," said Helga, rising calmly. "Good night, gentlemen. Good night, dear brother. I trust your friends do not find you as boring as I do."

She swept out of the room. For some reason, we found it hard to resume the party. One after the other we began to stifle yawns and soon we broke up and went home.

6

And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell down upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

—*The Book of Job*

WE DID NOT HEAR FROM FATHER for a long time. At last, shortly after New Year's—my eighteenth birthday—we received news from him. Fighting with our troops on the Dnieper, he had been captured and was now a prisoner in Russia. We were happy to hear he was alive and well; he said he could not complain of his treatment; he would be released at the end of the war; when that would be, no man could say, but with the changes in the situation brought about by America and Russia, the end could not be very far away. There was a marked lack of enthusiasm about the war in Father's letter, but we attributed it to the censorship.

Mother cried for days. I read and reread the lines of the letter in which Father sent me his love, urged me to take good care of myself, to become a real man. In wartime, to be a real man means to be a soldier, and I became restless. Calling Oscar, Teddy and Siegfried together, I proposed that, since we were likely to be called at any moment, we ought to volunteer in the hope of being assigned to the same unit. Through Oscar's family connections, this was actually accomplished. As soon as the news came, we went to a café together, constituted ourselves the Four Musketeers and got drunk. Then I went home and told Mother I had been conscripted.

I shall always remember my mother most vividly as she was at this time. She was at my side from early morning till midnight, packing my things, giving me advice about protecting my health, telling me funny stories, singing my favorite songs, talking more abundantly than I had ever heard her talk before; doing everything in her power to keep up my spirits. Curiously enough, I was not afraid. My physical courage is nothing to brag about; and, as you know, doctor, the idea of death appais me. But what I fear is solitary death,

to die somewhere in a forgotten place, to die with my work undone, to die uselessly. Going to the front is another thing altogether. You are no longer a lonely atom in the world; you are part of a great collective will engaged in so vast a project that the idea of death seldom occurs to you. I was then on the wrong side of the war, but I could not know that at eighteen. I found no difficulty in sustaining myself by the oldest of human codes, the code of the courageous fighter. Then there was that newer and even more binding code, the code of loyalty to one's country.

No, it was not of myself that I thought those last few days before leaving for the front. I thought of my mother. Her particular kind of courage, as old as war itself, seemed to me truly magnificent as only those things can be which spring from love. To part with a husband, then with a son for a conflict not of her making, to mask with a smile the suffering which pervaded her entire being, to accept in advance all that might happen as something uncontrollable, therefore not to be cursed—that was the greatest heroism of all. And the fact that so much sentimental nonsense had been written about it did not by one jot lessen its greatness and goodness. In these awful crises, when the whole of mankind wrestles on the brink of the unknown abyss for mastery of the future, it is the simple virtues—those which have enabled the race to survive from time immemorial, those which in our pride, corruption and vanity we forget or ridicule—that rise up as the real rocks of salvation.

It was my last night in Vienna. The following morning my friends and I were to embark for the front. I started for my room; and, as if this were a night like any other night, as if I were still a schoolboy instead of a soldier, my mother accompanied me to the door of my room. Kissing me, she said softly, as if uttering a benediction: "Good night, dear son. . . . Sleep well." I watched her graceful figure, her shoulders now slightly drooping, moving down the corridor and thought: this is how they who give us life bid us farewell at the gates of death.

I crept into bed and tried to go to sleep, but was too restless. I thought of my father, a prisoner in a far-off, strange country which had just entered on a totally new kind of life. I wished I could see him and talk to him. Was he able to see anything of the new life? Was he satisfied that this was the fulfillment of his dream? Thinking of his expectations, I slipped out of bed and went into the library. I found a book on the shelves which I began to read, and which kept me up till dawn. The mere mention of this book at this moment, doctor, stirs nameless feelings in me; I am getting a lump in my throat and cannot say why. What was that book? I have not thought

of it for two decades, and yet it must have meant a great deal to me, or I would not at once forget it and feel so strongly about it.

Before my mind's eye there rises a little green book. I can now see the title on the cover: *The World's Revolutions*. Now I open it to the title page. I cannot remember the author's name, but the year in which the book was published stands out clearly—1909! What a long time ago! What strange ideas people had in those days! And now I remember for the first time in years what the book was about. The library, the whole house is still; and in the silence of that night I turn the pages of the little green book. Its theme is that mankind has been struggling for centuries toward freedom. Beginning with man's evolution from the animals, it describes the primitive social revolutions; then comes the story of the Roman Empire, its proletariat, and the Christian revolution; then the Reformation, and the Puritans; and now we are at the American Revolution and its reflection in France. At last we have reached the concluding chapter, which I finish as dawn rises over the city. It is the story of the world proletarian movement—up to 1909. Why does the year of publication obsess me so. 1909! That's the thesis of the book, anyway. As a matter of fact, doctor, even now the basic idea of that green little volume appears sound. It would not be difficult to show a continuity in the long struggle which men have waged for liberty across the ages. That little green book put everything rather naively; and perhaps that is one of the reasons it appealed to me so much at eighteen. Wait! At this moment one of its passages leaps into my mind. Referring to the revolution which opened the twentieth century, the little green book said: "Even now the Russian proletariat has inaugurated the new cycle of revolutions which will from now on sweep over the industrial countries of this globe and clear the ground for a true civilization." I remember reading that passage over several times before I realized it referred not to 1917, but to 1905. "Bourgeois society," the little green book went on to say, "is in its last throes. Less than ever are the statesmen of the ruling classes able to manage social affairs so that humanity can attain its full development. But the proletarian world has grown, until now the sun never sets on its realms. Millions of wide-awake and determined men, women and children, clasping hands in all climes, are devoting themselves with head and heart to the upbuilding of the international commonwealth. What the Christian proletariat dreamed, what the revolutionary serfs coveted with yearning hearts, what the heroes of the early proletarian battles in the nineteenth century consecrated with their blood, that will be triumphantly accomplished by the proletarian revolution of the twentieth century."

Perhaps I ought to stop here, doctor, but you told me to utter

L.G.
whatever came into my mind, no matter how irrelevant or dull it might seem, on the ground that in the end it might turn out to be both relevant and interesting. Now the little green book's closing words rise to haunt me after all these years; I remember how vividly all its figures appeared in that silent library, how I leaned back in Father's chair, trying to imagine what they were really like: the Gracchi, Jesus as a revolutionary leader, the Lollards under Wat Tyler, John Ball and Wycliffe; the Anabaptists, the Hussites, John Milton, Tom Paine, Tom Jefferson and the Declaration of Independence, the men of the French Revolution and those of the Paris Commune. How eloquent the peroration was! The universe, said the little green book, required eons of time to produce the first spark of human consciousness on an animal plane; other eons passed away before the animal-man became a class- and world-conscious proletarian; another immense period may be required to develop the world-conscious human mind into the universe-ruling mind; but it is the glorious destiny of the proletarian mind to rescue humanity from political and economic oppression, in order that an intelligence may develop which shall rescue the highest product of cosmic evolution from cosmic oppression.

By the time I had finished reading it was daylight. I could hear Mother and the old servant moving about the house, making coffee, setting the table. I shaved, washed and got into my uniform.

Uncle Peter came to see me off. He and Mother chatted all through breakfast as if nothing unusual had happened. In the same mood they accompanied me to the railway station, the one at which I had seen my father off centuries ago, it seemed. In the crowd we found Oscar, Siegfried and Teddy with their friends and relatives. Helga was there, too, all smiles, obviously enjoying a spectacle whose real meaning seemed to escape her. Siegfried made a point of bowing elaborately to her and kissing her hand. There were greetings and farewells. Mother waved to me as I boarded the step of my car, and for the first time I saw tears in her eyes. Uncle Peter shouted: "God keep you, son!" The train pulled out. Soon everything vanished and we were flying into distance. It isn't only the coward who dies many times before his death; everyone, especially in an age of swift change like ours, loses one personality and gains another at each critical turning point. As I saw Vienna disappearing behind me, I knew that if I came back to it at all, it would be as a different man.

My friends and I were assigned to the troops on the Piave. I conducted myself in action as best I could, but remained a private to the end. Oscar's dash and family connections won him a commission after three months, and Teddy's brisk efficiency the stripes of a cor-

poral. I think Siegfried, who revealed great courage and unexpected skill, would have gained promotion, too; but it was generally accepted that his race canceled his merit. Of the fighting, the less said the better. There are things one needs to forget in order to live. At the moment, however, death was an everyday affair; we became hardened to it. Teddy was bayoneted in a hand-to-hand encounter; Oscar was blown to bits by artillery fire. Siegfried and I came out of it without a scratch, and accepted this gift of a second life casually as soldier's luck.

Occasionally we were cheered by letters from home. Mother and Uncle Peter wrote several times. Their letters were full of affection and gossip, but gave no indication of what was going on in Vienna.

Toward the close of the year, great restlessness seized the army on the Piave. News came through that Germany had overthrown the monarchy and declared a republic. Then, on All Soul's Day, we learned that the empire under which we were born had ceased to exist, and that our country, too, was now a republic. Our troops mutinied on the Italian front and the war came abruptly to an end. We were delighted to hear that an armistice had been declared. Then, for some unaccountable reason, our whole division was taken prisoner by a Scotch regiment at the bridge which spans the Tagliamento at Dignano. I spent the following year in a prison camp and found it a great relaxation after the trenches. Siegfried was restless and moody; he was anxious to get home, study medicine and begin practice as soon as possible. I did not know what I was going back to. I wondered what life was going to be like now that ancient empires had vanished and new groups were clamoring for power.

Mail was irregular. I did not expect any from my father, who was thousands of miles away, a war prisoner like myself. The silence from Mother worried me, but then you never knew when a letter might come. At last, toward the end of the year, two letters were handed to me at once. I weighed them in my hand and decided, out of respect for time, in which all events move in sequence, to open the one which bore the earlier postmark. A glance at the signature showed me it was from Uncle Peter.

"Well, dear Paul," it said, "the war is over and you should be with us soon. You have no idea how I long to see you. A year is long enough to keep anyone prisoner after peace has been declared. We'll walk down the Kaerntnerstrasse again, and I promise to buy you the best bottle of Riesling at the Café Central to celebrate the return of the Prodigal. But perhaps I had better warn you that you will hardly recognise the old city. So much has happened! The blockade seems endless. The entire country is in an incredible state of disorder—what's left of it! Wherever you turn, there is wreck-

age. The roads are blocked; there is no coal and no transportation. The streets of the capital are crowded with tired soldiers, each wearing a badge symbolizing his nationality—the nationalities that used to be part of the empire which, *Deo volente*, shall be restored to its rightful rulers by the grace of God. The soldiers have thrown away their arms; their uniforms are thick with mud. The workers are restless. Crowds gather outside Parliament and other government buildings, but nothing happens. A general strike has been called; it failed immediately. Following the example of the revolution in the east, councils of workers and soldiers have been formed, and for a few weeks these exercised power. But the country is really ruled by hunger and cold. There is no work, no wages, no food. Crime and suicide are so commonplace that nobody gives them a thought. Vienna is full of deserters and refugees. Disease is rampant, the hospitals are overcrowded and children die like flies. Many families pawn everything they can dispose of, and break up their furniture for firewood. You will find, when you come back, that a suit of clothes will cost you literally a fortune, and that women are wearing paper dresses which go to pieces in the rain. The streets are unrepaired, the houses are in a shocking state and the whole city is crawling with vermin. Not a pretty picture, but you may as well know these things in advance, so that you may be prepared for the worst. Count von Tepplitz, who was terribly shaken when his son was killed, saw a good deal of his money disappear in the inflation. Both losses hastened his death, though he was quite old, anyway. Helga and her mother have had to sell the large house, and have moved to a flat in the Ring. Helga, however, is not too depressed by all this. She has managed to get on the stage where she is playing minor parts, and while her talent is nothing remarkable, her face and figure, if I may say so, are stunning. Your mother is well, though she has caught cold in the past few days. She sends you her love and is writing you by the next post. She awaits your return anxiously—so hurry back to us. Affectionately, Your Uncle Peter.”

The second letter was postmarked a month later. I tore it open hastily. This, too, was from Uncle Peter.

“Dear Paul: It is very difficult for me to write this letter and it will be even more difficult for you to read it. There has been a flu epidemic in the city, and your mother’s cold turned out to be that terrible disease. After we put her to bed, she had me write to Marta and that good-natured girl came up from her village near Innsbruck to take care of her. The other maid was kept in the kitchen. When your mother developed a high fever, she talked continually about you, and of course about your father. I called in several specialists. The last of them found her in a coma. ‘I’m afraid, Mr. Hauser,’ he

said to me, 'that it's all over.' At these words your mother came to and sat up in bed with a start, her face drawn and flushed, her eyes burning with a strange fire. 'No,' she said in a low voice, 'I won't die, not yet; I know Arthur will come to me; I'll wait.' She lay back with her eyes open, looking vacantly into space, and for two days she clung to life by sheer force of will. Then—would you believe it, Paul?—your father arrived. How he has changed! He had sent a letter long ago, saying he had been released from his prison camp and giving the approximate date of his arrival, but in the confusion which now reigns over Europe, the letter was delayed and he came ahead of it. As he entered the room, a look of indescribable joy came into your mother's face. 'Now I can die in peace,' she said; then, turning to me, 'Peter, please call a priest.' I looked at your father. He sat in his chair, looking at your mother without saying a word. His face seemed to have gone dead; only his eyes revealed the love and anguish which filled him. I went for the priest. When we returned, there were only a few friends in the room. Professor Gross was there; and, though he is a Jew, his presence seemed to comfort your father. The priest approached the bed and held out the crucifix and your mother kissed it with the last ounce of her strength. As her head fell back on the pillow, her eyes taking their last lingering look on the world, the priest recited the *Misereatur*, then the *Indulgentiam*. Dipping his right thumb into the oil, he began to give extreme unction, first upon the eyes, then upon the lips, then upon the hands, finally upon the soles of the feet. Your mother sighed deeply, called your name twice and closed her eyes forever. I know this is dreadful news for you, Paul. But we must be humble in the face of Heaven's will. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Love to you, son. Your Uncle Peter."

I wept like a child. To think I was not with her when she died. Father will be brokenhearted. What is he like now?

*My own heart is not really alive unless it is striving;
The whole of mankind needs an agony
Working it fiercely, like a ferment
To expand its life and sustain its strength.*

—Les Moines

I GOT OFF at the railway station in Vienna and went to a café in the Ring. I wanted to feel refreshed before facing my father, whom I had not seen for over four years. The waiter eyed my shabby uniform as he took the order for coffee with Schlagobers. Despite the early hour, the café was crowded. Even amidst catastrophe, people go about the daily business of living; I had learned that in the trenches, where an unexpected cigarette seemed as important as a battle. From somewhere in the depths of the café came the sound of a small string orchestra playing the *Blue Danube*.

"Prisoner?" the waiter asked.

"Yes. Just released."

"How do you like our city?"

"Why do you ask?" I said, as if I were a stranger. This was not the world I had known. There was an undefinable tension in the air which was wholly new.

"Ah," said the waiter, "you should have seen Vienna before the war."

It was the first time I had heard that remark. In the coming years, I was to hear it—and say it—a thousand times.

"Has it changed much?" I said. "This café seems to be full as usual, the wine is flowing, and I notice they are still playing the old waltzes. Your clients seem to be having a gay time."

"Profiteers," the waiter said bitterly. "Nothing but profiteers and tourists."

I drank my coffee, paid the check, left a tip for the waiter and walked home. When I knocked at our flat, an elderly woman opened the door. No, she said, the Schumans did not live here. She called the janitor. He was a new man and had never heard of the Schumans either.

At the National Library, Uncle Peter embraced me with great warmth, patted my hand, laughed, and made me sit down at his small desk in the corner of his office.

"You look well, Paul," he said with pride. "Quite a solid fellow. They must have fed you well."

"I was just at the old place and they never even heard of us," I said. "Where is Father?"

"He couldn't stay there after your mother was gone," Uncle Peter said. "Here's his new address." He scribbled it hastily on a small pad, tore off the sheet and handed it to me. "If you want to see him these days, you'll find him at the future."

"What future?"

"That's the name of his magazine—*The Future*. He's owner, editor, business manager and staff combined, also bookkeeper, secretary, telephone operator and copy boy."

"A theater magazine?"

"*Theater*," Uncle Peter sniffed contemptuously. "Theater indeed. Certainly not! Your father won't have anything to do with the theater. It's a *political* magazine. These days, he breathes, eats and sleeps nothing but politics."

My uncle lit his pipe, pushed it slowly between his lips under the gray walrus mustache and added mournfully:

"The time he spent in Russia ruined him. He was always an infidel, but at least he used to be a jolly sort of fellow. He knew how to have a good time and how to enjoy a joke. Now he's a gloomy zealot intent upon saving the world."

To reach my father's office, I had to climb three flights of a rickety old house in one of the poorer sections of the city. I knocked at the door, and when I heard his familiar voice say, "Come in!" opened it. In a large, badly lit room full of books and newspapers, behind an old desk, piled high with books, newspapers and letters, sat my father. He leaped to his feet and rushed toward me.

"Paul! At last!" he cried, embracing me, and kissing me on both cheeks.

He offered me a shaky kitchen chair and sat down on a swivel behind his desk, an antique from which the paint had long ago been rubbed off.

Uncle Peter was right: my father had changed so profoundly that he appeared to have lost all semblance to the man he once was. He was now thin, gaunt; his hair was completely white, and he had let it grow long and heavy. Combed back straight from his forehead, it made his head resemble that of an aging lion. His face was thin and tightly drawn; yet, curiously enough, under its determined lines, there was an indefinable air of youth. As he took my hands in his,

the tense, concentrated gleam in his eyes relaxed, and he smiled almost the way he used to in the old days.

"There are a lot of questions we want to ask each other," he said, leaning back in his chair. "But isn't there something you want to do first?"

"Yes, there is," I said.

He put on his hat and coat and we went out. First we stopped at a florist's, and Father bought two large bouquets of lilies. Then we took a cab and rode in silence to the cemetery, acutely aware of each other's presence and the great bond between us. It was a chilly fall afternoon, and through the cab windows we could see the wind driving dust down the streets. At the grave, we bared our heads and laid the flowers on the mound, over which stood a simple slab with the name and dates. We stood bowed for a long time. I caught a glimpse of my father's face; some of its new, hard lines had vanished and the old tenderness was back in his serious blue eyes. Later, when we entered the cab for the return trip, he spoke once, saying in an even voice intended to conceal emotion, "What a wonderful woman she was," and we rode back to the center of the city in silence.

During lunch, at a large restaurant in the Ring, we had some wine and began to talk freely. Father asked me a thousand questions about myself, made me tell anecdotes about my war experience, commented on the latest political events, told jokes which made us both laugh heartily, and it was a long time before I noticed he had not told me a thing about himself.

Before I could ask any questions, he paid the check, looked at his watch and insisted I go with him to a tailor to be measured for a suit of mufti.

"My weekly will have to give up some cartoons in the next issue for this," he said, "but it's not every day that one has this kind of reunion."

Vienna had not developed your wonderful American ready-to-wear system, which can fit a suit on your back and send you out dressed inside of thirty minutes. No, our tailor had to bring out rolls of cloth, woolens, cottons and mixtures of various colors and designs. Where he got them in the prevailing shortage was a mystery he guarded with a sly grin. He delivered long paeans of praise about each piece of goods, accompanied by the sarcastic, skeptical comments of my father, who had learned something about clothes in his theater days. Then came a selection, suggested by the tailor, which my father vetoed; and a suggestion by my father, which I vetoed. Then I made a choice myself, and changed my mind only three times. The tailor looked irritated; my father looked amused. Very well, I said, we'll stick to the dark blue. Now came the measuring, the nota-

tions and the tailor's long-winded assurances that, when completed, the suit would make me look like a prince. That simile was still considered a high compliment, despite the republic. As the tape measure lingered for eternities on my shoulders, hips, legs and arms, I felt grateful that the little things of everyday existence went on despite wars and revolutions with a pleasant, monotonous reassurance of life's unbroken continuity.

By the time the tailor's ritual was over, night had fallen, and Father and I went to a restaurant to dine. We returned to Father's place quite late and in high spirits. Father hastily glanced through the messages on his desk, sat down in his swivel chair and motioned me to the chair facing him.

"Sit down, my son," he said, "and relax. I'm sure you haven't had such a hard day since the Piave."

"I've had a wonderful time, father. Now tell me what you are doing. What is this paper you edit? We really ought to get acquainted, you know."

My father looked at me for a moment and said slowly: "Paul, I am a happy man. Those plays and parties, all the fun we used to have in the old days, that was nonsense, the games of a few spoiled children. Everything has changed. Today the pulse of life beats in the struggle for a new world. To be part of that struggle, to contribute to it however humbly, is the greatest possible joy. Unless you are one of the millions the world over who work and fight for freedom you cannot possibly know that exaltation. People talk of sacrifice. That's nonsense, too. We sacrifice nothing; we receive everything."

"Just what are you doing?" I asked.

My father's lips, thinner than they were in the old days, parted in a strange smile.

"In a movement that embraces the globe," he said, "which has millions of adherents everywhere, yes, in every single country without exception, everyone must do what he can. Division of labor, discipline, the collective spirit—that is what will enable the peoples of the world to liberate themselves from the yoke of ages and create a new, free civilization. That's how it is: everyone must do what he can, whether he is leader or follower, genius or mediocrity, worker or scientist. I'm doing what I can. It's a small enough contribution—running a weekly paper. But you ought to know from your war experience, Paul, that victory is possible only when every man stands at his post. I'm standing at mine, small as it is, and from performing this duty I derive the greatest possible pride and joy. Here, let me show you something."

He rose from his chair, picked up copies of *The Future* and

began to turn the pages for me. They were alive with the struggles and hopes of those times, raised high by the astounding victories of the people on one-sixth of the globe, undaunted by the failure of the cause in Munich and Budapest. Often the articles were technical, dealing with subtleties of political intrigue, swiftly changing correlation of social forces, economic catastrophes which no one seemed able to explain except the International. Sometimes there were amusing or biting caricatures, drawn by Vienna artists or reprinted from abroad. Here, too, were poems, stories, reviews of literature, the theater and the film. But, however, the theme and style might vary, a single idea animated all this writing and drawing: mankind's great moment of decision had come: the high turning point was here at last for the people everywhere to leap from slavery to freedom.

Glancing over those pages, I could not help thinking of my father sitting in that shabby room day after day, keeping his finger on the pulse of the world, following with single-minded devotion every twist and turn of the vast struggle. Gone were the days, obviously, when he looked upon Vienna as the hub of the universe and upon his theatrical and literary set as the cream of mankind. Set down in the columns of *The Future* or lying piled up on his old desk were strong, warmhearted letters from simple men and women whom he did not know personally but who addressed him as one near and dear to them. And here were those countless mimeographed memos and publications from every corner of the globe, those reports, complaints, suggestions, orders, narratives, accusations and prophecies in which one could visualize the peoples of Europe, the races of Asia, the nations across the Atlantic surging through space and time in immense tumult; and, rising high above the conflict, one could hear the voices of the submerged millions crying out for that security and dignity to which all men are entitled.

Now Father resumed his seat and motioned me to mine; he offered me a cigarette, lit it, and took one himself.

"What our great Founders prophesied has come true," he said quietly. "When you will settle down and begin to read the memoirs and the fantastic guesses which the elite of the old order are beginning to rush into print, you will see at once who is right, they or we."

"They have certainly made a mess of things," I said.

My father turned in his swivel and lifted a red-covered volume from the bookshelves behind him. I saw he wanted me to read something; he may have already guessed the strange power which the printed word was beginning to acquire over me; but there was something else involved in this, too. Once a Vienna wit whose most ardent desire was to appear "original," my father was developing a

reverence for the authority of his teachers which was boundless. He now turned the pages of the red-covered book, located what he was seeking, marked it with a heavy pencil along the margin and handed the book to me.

"Here, Paul," he said. "See what one of our great teachers had to say about our times—and he said it nearly forty years ago!" A gleam of triumph lit his blue eyes. "Go on, Paul, read it aloud."

I glanced at the first few lines and started to read:

"And finally, no war is possible for Prussia-Germany except a world war, and a world war indeed of an extension and violence hitherto undreamed of. Eight to ten million soldiers will mutually massacre one another, and in doing so will devour the whole of Europe until they have stripped it barer than any swarm of locusts has ever done. The devastations of the Thirty Years' War compressed into three or four years, and spread over the whole Continent; famine, pestilence, general demoralization both of the armies and of the mass of the people produced by acute distress; hopeless confusion of our artificial machinery in trade, industry and credit, ending in general bankruptcy . . ."

"What do you say to that?" my father interrupted. "What scientific foresight! Hasn't it all come true—even to the length of the war and the number of men killed? It *was* four years! It *was* ten million men! And consider his detailed prevision of the economic catastrophe! But that's nothing to what follows."

He leaned back in his chair, closed his eyes and listened as I read on:

" . . . collapse of the old states and their traditional state wisdom to such an extent that crowns will roll by the dozens on the pavement, and there will be nobody to pick them up. . ."

"How do you like *that*?" my father said, opening his eyes and smiling broadly. "Go on, go on!"

" . . . absolute impossibility of foreseeing how it will all end and who will come out of the struggle as victor; only one result absolutely certain: general exhaustion and the establishment of the conditions for the ultimate victory of the working class. This is the prospect when the system of mutual outbidding in armaments, driven to extremities, at last bears its inevitable fruits. This, my lords, princes and statesmen, is where in your wisdom you have brought old Europe. And when nothing more remains to you but to open the last great war dance—that will suit us all right. The war may perhaps push us temporarily into the background, may wrench from us many a position already conquered. But when you have unfettered forces which you will then no longer be able again to control, things may go as they will: at the end of the tragedy, you will be

ruined and the victory of the proletariat will either be already achieved or at any rate inevitable.' ”

I closed the red-covered book and slowly put it down on the desk.

“That is a rather remarkable prophecy,” I said.

“Isn't it?” said my father. He lit a fresh cigarette and began pacing up and down the room. “They have ruined Europe; and the way is now open for our victory. Above the great darkness with which they have filled the world hangs the great light of the hope we have lit.”

“How are things going in Vienna?” I said.

“The caste system under which we suffered is dead forever,” said my father, pacing up and down. “Under the republic, all meaning has gone out of the old aristocracy. That large, overprivileged family of archdukes, generals, ministers and courtiers, all related to each other, all charming, all useless and all living on our sweat and blood—these are finished for good. The Emperor, the Empress and their numerous children are in exile. The Hapsburg dynasty, which has lorded it over our people for nearly seven centuries, has ended. Its power has passed—to the Social Democrats.”

He stopped abruptly in his tracks and turned to me, his face grim with some disturbing thought.

“That's the trouble,” he said. “Would you believe it? The Social Democrats are actually *boasting* it was not the police but *they* who stopped us in the streets. And it's true! They've done the same in Germany. Their leaders gratefully accept the shameful role of Praetorian Guard to the privileged caste which is fighting to retain the old system. The blood of workers covers the streets of Europe's capitals—and it is they who press the triggers.”

“That's strange,” I said. “Weren't they your comrades once? Don't they speak in the name of the identical goal?”

My father returned to his chair and sank into it slowly. He looked at me a long time in silence, and there was a distant look in his blue eyes, now grown tired, as if he had withdrawn himself from me. Then he smiled and said:

“You are asking a difficult question, Paul. No great advance has ever been made by the people except through struggle against the ruthless despotism of their oppressors. That struggle has invariably been accompanied by splits in the vanguard of the oppressed. It can't be helped. Some leaders become corrupt and go over to the enemy. Some groups get bogged down in ideas which have outlived their validity and thereby become absolutely dangerous.”

Father looked at me as if trying to make sure I not only understood his idea, but was in sympathy with it. Then he added hastily:

“Think of the early Christian sects, the splits among Cromwell's

followers, the conflict between the Jacobin factions in the French Revolution."

"I know little about the French Revolution," I said, "and less about the early Christian sects."

"Then we can postpone this for some future day," said my father. "By the way, what are your plans? Your mother has left us both some money, of which the Hauser clan continues to have a good deal in spite of the debacle. I've sunk my share in *The Future*. You can do with yours whatever you like."

"I have no definite plans yet," I said. "Would you like me to work with you on *The Future*?"

From the light that came into my father's eyes I could see the question pleased him. He thought about it in silence awhile and said:

"No, Paul, I think not. You seem to have no instinct for practical politics, and the cause in which we are engaged is not only the loftiest in modern history but also the most dangerous. Why don't you go back to the university and finish your studies? A Ph.D. and a little knowledge—even in the distorted form handed out by these institutions—won't hurt you, no matter what occupation you follow later."

"If you must know," I said, "that's precisely what I want to do."

We both laughed heartily. My father took out his watch, and whistled softly.

"One o'clock," he said. "Time to go to bed. I've got a heavy day tomorrow. You'll live here, of course?"

"Would you like it?" I said.

"Tremendously."

"Where do I sleep?"

"How about a sandwich and some beer?"

"No, father, I think I'll go to bed at once. I'm tired and sleepy."

He led me into the next room, in which was a bed, two chairs, a washstand and a clothes closet. It was fairly neat, though far from the comfortable flat we once occupied.

"You take this," said my father. "I'll sleep on the couch in the office until we can pick up another bed. There's a third room in this palace, and we can fix that up for you later. Good night, Paul."

"Good night," I said and started to undress.

I was so sleepy I literally threw myself into the bed, turned out the light and closed my eyes.

I could not sleep a wink. All my nerves suddenly became wide awake. In that silence and darkness I began to think of the future.

Vague hopes filled me, followed by vague forebodings. I was fortunate; amidst the wild tumult of the world, I would be permitted to study. The books I wanted to read, the music I wanted to hear seemed endless; one life would not be enough. I was tired of Europe's long tension; I wanted to play, to make love. Helga. Was Siegfried still mad about her? I wondered whether he would carry out his plan to turn Catholic. His race appeared to him an unnecessary burden, and he was haunted by the anxiety to put on the mask which would enable him to lose himself in his surroundings. How much more courageous and dignified his father was. Professor Gross went to the other extreme rather, and protected himself with pride of race. But that was better. Where there is abnormal injustice, there must be abnormal forms of self-protection, but it is always best to retain the integrity of one's soul, whatever it may be. What was mine like? I had never really known it, and it was still in the process of formation. The future: a long voyage of discovery in time. If father was right, the millennium would soon be here, the perfect state would solve all our problems. That was unjust. He had never said that. It was I who longed for some absolute, for a universal, secular state of grace. That would make father laugh, and he would be right. Still, the world had changed fantastically; it would continue to change perhaps even more fantastically. Was there anything stable to cling to? Yes, behind the undeciphered turmoil of the present there stretched the recorded past, immense and changeless, complete like a poem, a play or a painting. The countless figures crowding the vistas of history could never alter their destiny. What had been done could not be undone; the sayings which had come down to us could neither be erased nor amended. Every generation could read its own meaning into the events of the past, just as every poet could write his own interpretation of Iphigeneia at Tauris, but it could not reverse them. Much remained to be discovered about the past, but no caprice, no act of will could save Caesar's life at the foot of Pompey's statue or win Waterloo for Napoleon. Was there nothing we could learn from this long, vast heritage of human experience? Did life begin anew every century, following totally unprecedented laws inscribed especially for its benefit by fate? I must ask old man Gross about this. By all means take his course in the history of civilization at the university. Why not be like the man in Goethe's poem?

One who thoughtfully ponders the centuries,
Surveys the whole in the clear light of the spirit;
All that is petty has vanished from sight:
Oceans and continents alone are of account.

As dawn came streaking through the windows, I fell asleep and had a queer dream. I was sitting in the rear of St. Stephen's cathedral. In the choir grille, the one place woman has not yet been permitted to ascend, stood Mother and Marta singing the *Venite Adoremus*, their voices rising under the gloomy vaults with singular purity. Up one of the aisles, marching slowly and with superb dignity toward the nave, was Uncle Peter, swinging a censer in his right hand. From the censer emanated the fragrance of fresh, hot coffee. High in the pulpit stood Father, dressed in a surplice, the little green book in his hand, preaching a sermon. "*Ni dieu, ni maître!*" he pronounced in a loud, clear voice. "The united human mind, lifted to world control by the proletarian revolution, will become the natural god of the universe, whose highest product it is. Proletarians of all countries, unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains. You have a world and a universe to gain!" From the choir grille, Mother and Marta looked in alarm at Uncle Peter, who was now standing at the altar, gazing intently upon the carving in black marble which represented the stoning of St. Stephen. To everyone's utter astonishment, Uncle Peter raised his head and chanted in a grave voice: "*Per saecula saeculorum*, world without end, Amen!" Suddenly the whole scene vanished and was imperceptibly replaced by another. I was standing on a crowded boulevard in the Ring, holding Helga in my arms. A wonderful perfume filled her hair as I kissed her. "I don't love you, Paul," she said, "but won't you love me?"

I opened my eyes. Sunlight flooded the room. There was a knock at the door and Father called:

"Get up, Paul. It's nine o'clock!"

8

*Rounding their naked haunches,
And their beautiful fleshy buttocks,
Down which their golden hair cascaded.*
—*Les flamandes*

BEAUTIFUL TO LOOK at, gay in the restaurants and cafés catering to people who made money out of the general catastrophe, Vienna became more and more intolerable in the three years I spent at the university. The republic was bankrupt, and for lack of money all the schools suffered. With its precarious budget, which even at best was never sufficient, our institution was compelled to live on the intellectual capital of earlier times. It could not keep up with modern science, hire truly capable teachers or supply us with up-to-date books. This only enhanced the atmosphere of unreality about us. There was still that dear, old Viennese *Schwaermerei* which impelled half the students to specialize in philosophy at its most seductive and weakest point, "Faustian" idealism. You have no idea how many of my fellow students were romantics, as defined by one of our great Viennese novelists. In his famous analysis of the disintegration of values which marks this age, Hermann Broch has described the romantic as a man who shrinks from knowledge, who must have a bounded world, a closed system of values, who seeks in the past the completion he longs for. I was myself not innocent of that longing; though fortunately, the course in the history of Western civilization which I took with Professor Gross saved me in part from extravagant flights into the unreal. The old man made us study economics to remind us that before man can climb the endless spiral of dialectics leading to a self-contained, abstract universe, he must come to terms with the obdurate, elusive materials of the actual world.

It was residing with Father under the same roof, however, that most tended to keep me on the ground. Our living room, which was also the office of *The Future*, was always crowded with people who came for conferences, meetings and casual chats—though among my father's friends even casual conversation was never wholly divorced from the serious business of the age. Most of our visitors were

workers; there was also a sprinkling of employed and unemployed engineers, physicians, teachers, and two or three former army officers. Sometimes, just as in earlier years, yet in what entirely different surroundings, I would sit in a corner and listen to impassioned debates lasting late into the night. At other times, poring in my room over the provisions of the Treaty of Westphalia or the writings of Erasmus, I would hear coming through the door animated discussions about the struggle here and now.

Occasionally I would see Siegfried Gross, busy these days climbing into aristocratic, conservative circles which he imagined would give him security in a society torn by hatred, suspicion and conflict. Now and then, when I was at the Library, I ran into Uncle Peter, who talked to me cautiously for fear I might drop some remark of use to my father—an enemy of organized society, according to Uncle Peter, if there ever was one. Once in a while I amused myself by going to cafés with a crowd of students, drinking more wine than was good for me and humming in an undertone an undecipherable accompaniment to better voices which more or less carried the tune of *Gaudeamus Igitur*. A common defense against the horror of those times was an intense preoccupation with pleasure; our senses were determined to master or succumb to a world our spirits could no longer understand.

I think it was this, more than anything else, which brought Helga and myself together. It started with the formal call I made to pay my respects to her and her widowed mother, to tell them about Oscar's fine conduct at the front. Helga had changed. She had grown taller and thinner, and her finely shaped features had acquired an imperceptible but unmistakable hardness. Her voice, deliberately pitched low for effect, maintained itself steadily in sentences which no longer emphasized every other word in excessive enthusiasm. Most of the time she spoke as if she were withholding something and dared you to guess what she really thought. I set this down to the presence of her mother.

When I left, Helga accompanied me to the door and asked me to call again the next day.

I came at four in the afternoon. Helga was alone. She said her mother was out somewhere taking coffee with friends and it was the servant's day off. We talked about the weather, the news of the day, her experiences in the theater, my studies at the university. The internal life of her blue eyes had changed considerably. They seemed to be void of all illusion. Moving upon everything with a bold assault, they suggested a desire for some kind of conquest which I did not understand but could not help sensing. She brought out a carafe of

Tokay wine, two glasses and some cookies and sat down next to me on the soft couch. As she leaned back comfortably to smoke a cigarette, I noticed the whiteness of her long throat and the startling color of her lips which were now redder than they had been five minutes earlier and a little moist. Though she had grown up during the war, I still thought of her as very young and of myself as a veteran. The more alluring she looked, the more protective I felt, but could not say against what I wanted to protect her. There were things in my blood which dared not enter my mind; they were engulfed in the immense gladness which filled my whole being. Helga seemed supremely beautiful and a precious person whose happiness was the most important thing in the world. At dusk, without turning on the lights, she accompanied me to the door, exhaling a fragrance that made me drunk. She asked me to come again the following week at the same time. I kissed her hand and walked out on air.

At home I found Father busy over a mass of papers on his desk. He greeted me cordially, followed me to my room and talked about the events of the day. It was always like that in those grave and hopeful years, and Father never failed to inspire in me a little of that vast expectation which filled the hearts of millions the world over. The year which saw Germany and Austria overthrow their semifeudal monarchist regimes saw also the rising of the people in Finland. The following year prophets of socialism set up governments in Hungary and Bavaria which could not fall without leaving creative memories behind them; in far-off Korea, too, the people made an attempt to take their destiny into their own hands. I will anticipate by saying that the great hope ran high well into the twenties. Remember how the decade opened, doctor: there was a nationalist revolution in Turkey; Italian workers seized factories; the following year, the proletariat of Germany rose; two years after that, a similar turning point seemed to appear in Bulgaria, Morocco and in Germany. Then, in the fifth year of the decade, there was an uprising in Estonia; the next year in Syria; the next, a general strike in England; and the next, workers' demonstration of prime importance in my own city. I think of the upsurge in Indonesia, the deep ferment in India, the Great Chinese revolution! I have enumerated these events out of habit. Like all things in the immediate past, they seem remote and somewhat unreal now, more unreal than the fall of the Roman Empire or the speeches of Robespierre. But at that time Father felt the earth was really trembling at its foundations; he was certain the international party was at last becoming the human race; for as revolutions advanced and retreated and peoples were beaten back for the time being, the great hope had sunk its roots deep into one-sixth of the globe, whose hard-won,

unexpected victories filled my father and millions like him with the conviction that the gates were finally opening upon that long road which leads to the golden age.

Father's prophecies moved me deeply. I was glad the world, after so many eons of misery, was at last going to be happy. But I was young and could not help thinking of private happiness, too. To be with Helga, to hear her talking about anything at all, to confide my thoughts to her was to be happy.

One afternoon as we sat on the couch in her living room, she turned to me suddenly, and asked whether I was lonely. Before I could reply, she hastened to say:

"Of course you are lonely, Paul. We are all lonely. I know dozens of people, and they all like me, yet I am very lonely."

I felt sorry for her and offered her eternal friendship. She kissed me lightly on the lips and said she knew she could count on me. Then she began talking about her ambitions on the stage; someday she was going to be a star. I imagined her facing the tumultuous applause of a crowded house and wondered whether any of the men she knew in the theater had ever made love to her. This made me feel ashamed. I thought Helga's person was sacred, inviolate, not to be touched, not to be desired.

When I came to and once more caught the thread of her monologue, I heard her asking:

"Were you ever in love, Paul?"

"No."

"You mustn't let books devour all your feelings."

She took my hand in hers and I felt indignant. I began to explain I had meant real love, not mere desire, and said that as if I knew the difference. I said I had eaten not only of the Tree of Knowledge but also of the Tree of Life. Helga smiled, and that smile became a long, provocative laugh. Then there was a long silence, during which Helga sat close to me, her face flushed, her eyes afire with a bold glance which seemed to tear down all barriers. I sat vibrant with exaltation and alarm. We were crossing the threshold between our lives. Helga's arm body, so near to me now, was a wonderful mystery which lured me with such irresistible force that every desire lost its shadow of guilt and emerged clear, proud and sacrosanct. I leaned toward her. Thought vanished; I became all sense. When I kissed her, she relaxed completely in my arms. She closed her eyes, and when she opened them, I tried to read them and believed I saw joy. The silent acceptance of her apparent happiness increased my own. Above all wish and all desire was the supreme desire to fill her heart with happiness. Then, for a swift moment, there came into this Eden of pure feeling the noiseless

serpent of suspicion. How often had she surrendered with that ecstatic abandon, too smooth to be unpracticed? But the serpent vanished, and our bodies melted together in the fragrant, green woods of love, a heavenly realm beyond space and time.

We dressed in silence. I noticed how clear and soft her eyes had become. We laughed about nothing, started to chat lightly, with pretended casualness, about trifles. For every trifle around us was now important, every object in the room was marvelously real and stood out with extraordinary clarity. It was as if I had wakened from a long sleep and saw the world truly for the first time in years, a world in which loneliness no longer existed, in which everything vibrated with life and joy.

It was only later, when I had left the house and was walking through the narrow, twilight streets of the Inner City, that I began to realize how fulfilled desire may sometimes be followed by a nameless despair, as if we knew that even the most profound intimacy can never destroy all the barriers between two souls. I began to wonder what Helga was really like and whether our love would last a day, a year or forever. Whichever way I looked at it, I was a little frightened. I felt certain that no matter what happened to us or how far we might wander from each other, this union, however brief, would, by its very place in the turmoil of our youth, bind us together in one form or another to the end of our lives.

Soon my private happiness enhanced the value of the dreams which my father poured out to me, and in my joy I imagined that all those who struggled for the freedom of mankind were animated by love.

As a rule the large dreams remained in the background; my father and his friends were chiefly busy with the local struggle. I remember that shortly after I came home, in the early twenties, he filled his paper with articles supporting the demand of the trade-unions that the government stop the villainy of the profiteers within three weeks. The government's reply to these demands was a series of brutal police measures.

"They are relying on twenty thousand former army officers!" my father exclaimed one night to a group of men and women who crowded his office.

Sitting in a corner, smoking and listening, I was profoundly impressed by the sincerity of the faces around me and their intense, selfless concentration on the matter in hand.

"Yes," my father went on, "an extralegal Praetorian Guard—to crush the people! How is all this going to end? There is now a policeman for every two hundred citizens in Vienna, not to men-

tion thousands of spies, detectives and gendarmes. All armed, too! Swords, revolvers, clubs, machine guns, armored cars, tear gas! We ask for bread—they give us bullets!"

For a long time I accepted Helga with complete faith. I did not dare tell her all I felt. In moments of tenderness—walking in the Vienna woods; sitting opposite each other in a café, oblivious of the world; or lying in each other's arms—I would speak only part of the truth. I said she was beautiful, clever, magnetic; that her friendship made me the happiest man in the world. There was one thing I did not dare say. Suppose she did not respond? Yet it had to be uttered, and once, in an excess of feeling, the phrase slipped out:

"Helga, I love you."

I watched her face intently. She smiled, but did not answer. She left my arms, sat up and lit a cigarette, blowing the smoke rings coolly toward the tapestry on the opposite wall.

"Helga," I said, "you have never made me unhappy before. Why don't you answer my question?"

"You haven't asked me any question," she said lightly. "You simply told me something." She straightened her dress, rose, walked to the table and dropped her cigarette in a carved jade ash tray. She turned to me slowly.

"Paul . . . please don't spoil things."

I felt completely empty. Everything became vague, unreal. My first impulse was to leave, never to return. But I could not leave. Stripped of illusion, I still felt bound to her. Half a loaf, then.

So Helga and I continued to be what she called friends; but it was never quite the same again. I became aware that, while I had given her the whole of my heart, she had given me only a fragment of herself. I had not noticed before that she was leading a complex life of which she told me little. She saw people and attended parties of which I knew nothing; she never took me anywhere or introduced me to anyone. But she had an insatiable curiosity about everything which concerned me. Several times she came to the house. She had always wanted to meet Father, she said; what a pity he had abandoned the theater.

In December of that year, there was a great strike against increased living costs. Standing with my father on the sidewalks of the Ring, I saw crowds of workers attack the Bristol, the Grand and the Imperial. They were enraged at the profiteers who gorged themselves while the people starved. Storming through the rooms of the hotels, the workers hurled bedding, furniture and china out the windows. Father and I were swept by one surging crowd into Sacher's Hotel. From end to end, the dining room was jammed

with shouting, sweating men and women. Their leaders shouted demands: Frau Sacher must remove from the wall the portraits of Kaiser Wilhelm and the Emperor Franz Joseph, which continued to hang there in insolent defiance of the republic.

"Now we'll see some trouble," my father said, struggling in the crowd to hold on to my arm.

Instead, there was a typical Viennese episode. Frau Sacher leaped to a chair, lit a cigar, for all the world like another George Sand, and began to address the crowd in coarse, Viennese dialect. Her nerve and her argot—so paradoxical amidst tables at which the elite of the empire had dined—made the workers laugh heartily. They applauded the old lady's spunk, and I suspect they meant some of that applause for her loyalty. The crowd dispersed in good humor, leaving the imperial portraits where they were. Father laughed and joked about the incident all the way home.

"That's Vienna," he said. "And, one might also say, that's Frau Sacher for you."

But the moment he sat down at his desk, the joke was over. He wrote a furious editorial demanding that the government act immediately to relieve the distress of the people. Confiscate all foreign valuta! Seize all gold! Yes, even the gold stored up in the convents and churches! Impose a new property tax! Try a capital levy again! Stop the brigands! Feed the people!

Late in the evening, Helga dropped in. Father was very polite to her and she was full of questions. She had just heard about the demonstration and wanted all the gossip. Father always talked freely. He was ready at any time to explain his work and his theories to anybody who would listen. In those days, however, he maintained a certain reserve with Helga. He considered all persons suspect who were in any way connected with the upper and middle classes, and where he was voluble and frank with his friends or with me, he tended to be cautious with Helga. As he talked to her now, I could see something which until recently my undiluted feeling for Helga had completely obscured: she was not really interested in what Father said. Indeed, she barely took the trouble to conceal her prejudice against everything he stood for. But she watched him intently just the same. She sensed in Father that energy and ambition which roused her admiration for any man who possessed them. Because in this case the energy was selfless and the ambition impersonal—appearing solely as a desire to further the happiness of mankind—it had a special appeal for Helga. The Thais in her complex personality, eternal courtesan of the metropolis, was fascinated by that aspect of my father which was anchorite, and was wholly, so to speak, devoted to the work of the Lord. Later, from

one or two remarks which Helga let fall in the clouded intimacy of our incomplete love, it became obvious that she had already asked herself: Suppose, after all, they *do* win?

In those days, I often used to hear Father talking in his office with friends, or addressing a conference on some vital current issue, at the very moment when I sat in my room working on my studies of the past. Heated remarks floated in through the door about the occupation of the Ruhr as I was struggling with some dry, scholarly textbook on the rise of the feudal nobility in the age of the barbarian kingdoms, taking notes on the *History of the Franks* by Bishop Gregory of Tours, trying to memorize the Declaration of the Rights of Man or reading the life of Condorcet, who, unaccountably, had begun to attract me.

Then came Vienna's tragic winter. The university was compelled to close because its roof, for lack of funds, had not been repaired since prewar days. I spent a good deal of time at home, helping Father with his magazine, reading histories and taking notes. The streets of Vienna were a sad spectacle. Even upper-class people could be seen breaking stones along the riverbanks—retired generals, lawyers, physicians. The boulevards were full of professional beggars, the ultimate humiliation of man, and professional prostitutes, the ultimate humiliation of woman. And through all this misery the profiteers kept up a wild night life in the cafés and restaurants. They were by this time positively brazen. The fall of Munich and Budapest, the rise of the Italian blackshirts to power, convinced them that socialism was in retreat. Now the reactionaries began openly to organize the counteroffensive against the people of my country. Originally a citizens' defense corps, the Heimwehr was transformed into what my father insisted was a dangerous Praetorian Guard of the old order, whose mission it now became to crush all genuine popular movements for a better life. In private conversations, at meetings which were held late at night in his office, in the pages of *The Future*, my father again and again pointed out with alarm that German army officers, exiled by the Weimar republic for taking part in the Kapp putsch, were busy in our own villages training peasants in the use of arms. And when Monsignor Seipel became chancellor, Father did not sleep for two nights.

"This bodes no good," he said, shaking his white head as he paced up and down his office. "The clericals are bound to further the counterrevolution."

His melancholy prophecy found support in the wild inflation which now swept the country, accompanied by a mania for buying whose chief purpose was to get rid of worthless crowns. Helga telephoned me one day to tell me a huge joke. A relative of hers,

recently deceased, had willed her several million crowns. She spent them all on one pair of shoes! Wages were used up the day they were received. The city swarmed with a horde of Schieber, fantastic middlemen who opened undreamed-of vistas for the genus parasite. Everyone was gambling, speculating, profiteering and a vile, repulsive kind of egotism seemed to drip from every stone and crevice of the world. Worst of all—in my father's opinion—was the growing political apathy. I once repeated to him the saying of a well-known wit that in our country politics had become the little esteemed occupation of a little esteemed body of men.

"That's not at all funny," my father said. "Political apathy is the surest road to suicide."

I was ashamed to admit that I was myself infected with this apathy. The universal conflict was beginning to affect my nerves. What could I do about it anyway? Certainly, under prevailing conditions, it would not be easy to continue my studies. Having completed my course at the university, I had already made up my mind to follow in Professor Gross's footsteps and teach the history of Western civilization—if I was lucky enough to obtain a post at some school. For that I would need special courses. Where? Berlin? Paris? London? I was restless and undecided. Perhaps Helga would advise me. She was clever about practical things. Father said I could do whatever I saw fit, and added cheerfully that, with the world the way it was, it did not make much difference one way or the other where I took special courses; the important thing was to get a job afterward and try to be useful. By all means consult Helga. She knows you better than anyone except Father. Helga will sense just how much you want to leave Vienna and how much you want to stay. And while you are there, why not ask her to go with you? Would you dare? Suppose she says no? Then you'll ask her again later. We could get married here and spend our honeymoon abroad. Two years of it! And imagine, to study the French Revolution and love Helga, what could be more wonderful? Helga had never said she loved me, but she never said she didn't. And how does that famous saying go? Marry me and you'll learn to love me.

Helga received me in a new dress, a light-blue affair with long white organdie sleeves which set off her golden hair and blue eyes to great advantage. She was surprised to see me, said she was going out, but asked me to stay a few minutes. She guarded her dress carefully as she moved about the room, and the kiss she gave me when I sat down alone on the couch was rather remote. She seemed greatly excited about something. She fussed over me with a strange mixture of concern, embarrassment and formality, kept handing

me one cigarette while I was still smoking another and insisted I drink three glasses of Tokay. Now, for the first time, I noticed a large bouquet of long-stemmed red roses on the table.

"Have you inherited another fortune?" I said. "Congratulations."

"Not exactly." She laughed. "Though congratulations are distinctly in order. Paul, I'm getting *married*." Her voice rose to a high pitch on that word, like when she was a young girl. "For heaven's sake, darling, don't look so glum! You knew it had to happen *sometime*. I'm not getting younger."

"Who's the lucky man?" I asked, trying to keep my voice steady.

"You don't know him."

"What's his name?"

"Colonel Helmuth zu Fassenheim."

"One of the chancellor's henchmen," I said.

"You'll have plenty of time to be jealous of my husband later, Paul. Though why should you be? He's not half as good-looking as you, and he's positively a bore. When he's not annoying me with his long manly silences—he thinks that's English, can you imagine?—he drives me to distraction by the most atrocious, idiotic remarks. And, Paul—he's fat, like a wine barrel!"

"And at least seventy."

"Not at all! He's only sixty-five."

"There must be something about him you love."

"I didn't say I love him. I only said I'd marry him."

Marry me and you'll learn to love me.

"Does he know about me?" I asked.

"Not by name," she said quickly, almost unintentionally, as if she had not meant to reveal so much. Over her face there came a subtle shadow of alarm which passed swiftly. It was too late. "Naturally, I had to tell him someone like you existed."

"That was sincere of you," I said, clutching at the last straw. But Helga, for some reason, was intent upon stripping her motives bare.

"Yes," she said, "and nothing seasons love so well as a little jealousy, especially of an unknown rival."

She laughed in her old shrill voice, and suddenly became repulsive to me. Her cynicism was shocking; but, like most people when they shudder at an act of injustice or despotism of which they read in a book or newspaper, I secretly admired her audacity and wished I had some of it for better purposes; and I wondered at my own naive egotism which, during our years together, endowed her chiefly with ideal attributes which flattered my hopes.

"You're not just a bookworm, are you, Paul?" I heard her say. "The colonel is richer than Rothschild and has the best connections."

"As far as I'm concerned," I said, "the only good connection he will have from now on is you."

Helga laughed and placed her arms about my neck—carefully, so as not to spoil her dress.

"He'll be away a good part of the time," she said. "Right after the wedding, next Wednesday at St. Stephen's, he's being sent on a diplomatic mission to London."

"Isn't that nice," I said, removing her arms, and picking up my hat. "Then I won't be able to give him your regards."

"What are you talking about, Paul?"

"Why, it's perfectly simple. How can I give him your regards in London when I am going to be in Paris?"

Her eyes became bright blue with anger.

"You are going to Paris!" she cried. "And you didn't tell me a word about it!" She sat down on the couch and took out a small handkerchief from her sleeve. "You didn't tell me a word of this! You come here without any warning and spring it on me! You can't be trusted. You're like the rest of them." She started to snifle, but was too angry to carry it off, and began to rub her handkerchief with swift, violent jerks against the tip of her nose.

"There's something in what you say." I put my hat on the back of my head. "I've planned this trip for months, but didn't know how to break it to you gently. . . . Well, good-bye, Helga. I hope your marriage will be happy."

She did not accompany me to the door but sat in furious silence. As I stepped into the corridor, I said:

"In case you'd like to think of me sometime, think of me at the Sorbonne. But don't write me. I shall be reading only French and English."

I pulled the door slowly toward me and closed it.

9

*Oh welcome pure-eyed Faith, white-handed Hope,
Thou hovering angel, girt with golden wings.*

—Comus.

SOMETIMES, DOCTOR, I wonder how attentively you listen to me, what you think of it all, where these talks will lead in the end. I wonder in other ways about you, too. Apart from Russell Hague, who are your friends? Are you married? Have you children? I have always liked children. If you have any, please tell them one thing for me. Tell them there really was a time when the boots of the barbarians did not ring out across the boulevards of Paris. Tell them when we were young the Hero of Verdun was not yet the groveling Gauleiter of mankind's greatest foe. Tell them la douce France was at one time not wholly the private preserve of that gang of thieves and traitors whose spokesman is an ignorant, cunning, astute little gambler with a black unwashed mustache. The French people are paying a terrible price for their sins, like the rest of us; but their mission in Western civilization remains indispensable. What is the meaning of that nostalgia for "the mellow splendor of Paris, the enchanting equilibrium of French life, the graceful common sense of the people"? I think Georges Bernanos said it best: Regardless of France's shame, if she exalts the Spirit with which she has been incarnated, even though she may have betrayed it, she bears its stamp on her features—the image and resemblance of Liberty.

When I arrived that spring, Paris still carried the scars of the war both on its body and in its heart. At night the streets were dimly lit to save electric power. On the boulevards, as in the market places, many women wore black for mourning or economy. You could see crippled veterans begging in the streets, just as in my own city. But the wounds were slowly healing, and in spite of everything I could not help feeling Paris was a unique cosmopolis whose magic loveliness pervaded everything.

To open the window of my little hotel room on Montparnasse on an early May morning was to look out on a street saturated with

the brilliant sunlight of a tropical land miraculously free of heat. Breakfast at the corner café was a high adventure. The coffee was bad, but the dry, crisp croissant was something you would always remember along with the smile of the old woman who placed it before you at the bar. Riding through the park in a hansom cab drawn by a slow-moving horse took you through bewitched hours in which the spirit of the city, suffused with the fragrance of the spring, relaxed all your senses. And the people you met everywhere, courteous and graceful, revealed the meaning of that tolerance in the daily flow of life for which they alone have found the perfect phrase—"laissez faire." Tender France! Its indefinable spirit filled with beauty even the most commonplace things. You lay in bed at night, unable to sleep, and listened to the raindrops patter on your windowpane and it was not like any rain you had ever heard.

I liked to linger in the cafés over an apéritif and to watch the crowd go by. The women were not nearly so beautiful as ours, but they had charm, no doubt of that. I did not want to know any of them, not yet. How much better everything would have been if Helga had come along. What a commonplace ending to it all: to marry for money. But why think about it? Walk through this glorious city, every one of whose squares carries the image and resemblance of the struggle for liberty. Where can one turn in Paris without meeting memorials of the Great Revolution? With my back toward the Arc de Triomphe, rising high above the entrance to the Champs-Élysées in tribute to the victories of the revolutionary armies and Napoleon, I look down the Place de la Concorde, almost unchanged since the days when the guillotine stood there, relentless guardian of the First Republic. Now, crossing the Rue Saint-Honoré, once the home of Robespierre, I walk toward the Place Vendôme the story of whose center is the story of France. Here is the spot on which the equestrian statue of the Grand Monarque stood; then, on the same spot, the seated statue of Liberty to which Mme. Roland addressed her immortal remark from the scaffold on which she died; and finally, again on the same spot, the famous column, surmounted, as his legend waxed, waned and waxed again, by three different figures of Napoleon.

The little Jacobin who became emperor is everywhere. The triumphal arch at the Place du Carrousel, the fountain and column at the Place du Châtelet commemorate his military exploits against the foes of the Revolution; and the Invalides, containing his body encased in six coffins, is a sacred shrine for those whose souls are overwhelmed by the unfathomable mystery of power.

But France once adored spirit as well as power; for here, overlooking the Place Saint-Sulpice, are memorials to the preachers

Bossuet, Fénelon, Massillon, Fléchier; while the little Monceau Park off the Boulevard Haussmann contains monuments to composers like Chopin and Gounod, writers like Guy de Maupassant.

I wander about Paris touching history at every point. How far back the drama of Europe goes! Here is No. 9 Quai aux Fleurs, the site of Canon Fulbert's house, where Abélard inspired in the heart of Héloïse that love which survived them and is their noblest monument. And now past the bridge connecting this island with the Ile Saint-Louis, to the Notre-Dame cathedral where Abélard taught his dialectic and Napoleon seized the crown from the Pope's hand and placed it upon his own brow. Even in death he is everywhere. You cannot escape him, not even at Père-Lachaise. For here are the graves of Nodier, who saw him; of Heine, who worshiped him; of Delacroix, whose father served him; of Michelet, who tried to explain him. From liberty, equality and fraternity to his Imperial Majesty: the mystery of the deed. But there is another mystery, too. Here, past the Avenue Transversale, lie the bones of Molière and La Fontaine: the mystery of the word. And finally, beyond the Avenue Casimir-Périer, there is the Gothic canopy under which lie the remains of Abélard and Héloïse, united after seven centuries at last: the third mystery, perhaps the greatest of all—the mystery of love. Is it true, as Siegfried once said to me, that laws are disobeyed but love never? Deed, word and love at their highest are all blessed with the capacity of overcoming obstacles, of molding the obdurate materials of the world nearer to the aspirations of man's heart. But always at a terrible cost, always with suffering, often with blood. Requiescat in pace, death brings release even to those who have neither lived nor died in vain. And Balzac was right: these bones of the illustrious dead tell all and set the passer-by adreaming. Back to the Louvre, then, where the soul of the past remains immortal in art, eternal memorial of the endless energy and vision which animate man's spirit and apprehend reality in color and form. Then out again into the palpable everyday, the Paris sunlight, the clean vibrant air, the children in the park. Nowhere are children more beautiful than in Paris. If Helga had said yes, would we have had children? Power creates cities, accumulates treasures and kills men; love creates children and stands at the cradle of art.

After a week of sightseeing I decided it was time to report at the Sorbonne and present myself to Professor Boucher.

In a little dusty office which needed less books and more air, he rose to greet me from behind his desk; we shook hands with the conventional "Paul Schuman—André Boucher." As he started to read the letter of introduction from old Professor Gross, he brought

his face rather close to the paper and I noticed he wore no glasses. He was of middle height. There was a striking disproportion between his thin body and his broad shoulders. These must have been powerful in his youth; now they were bent, like those of a man who has spent years over books. His long fingers, hairy at the knuckles, held the letter steadily. They were unusual hands, strong and sensitive. Then he raised his head from the letter and looked at me. His gaunt cheeks were surmounted by a Roman nose which gave him an air of authority. He was clean shaven, and though he looked nearly sixty, his face was firm. Under his thick, heavy, jet-black eyebrows, sunk deep into their sockets were a pair of black, intensely brilliant eyes. When he began to speak, they filled with an extraordinary light, as if they penetrated everything and felt for everything.

"Sit down please, M. Schuman," Professor Boucher said. His voice was pleasantly deep. "How is my good friend Gross?"

"Fine. Last winter he was ill for a while, but he's fully recovered and back at work."

"I'm happy to hear that. I know you had a bad winter in Vienna. The city must be in terrible shape. C'est la guerre, vous savez. You must have noticed that Paris carries the marks of war, too."

"Nothing like ours, Professor Boucher. There's a great difference between victory and defeat."

"But certainly, young man! In spite of all nonsense to the contrary, victory is always better than defeat. . . . Now, let me see. My good friend Gross tells me you want to take special courses in history, and that you are particularly interested in the French Revolution." He leaned over and fixed his sharp black eyes on me. "Tell me, young man—why the French Revolution? Is it a caprice, a tribute to prevailing fashion, or have you given the matter some thought?"

"I'm afraid my ideas are not very original," I said.

"I did not expect them to be. I shall be satisfied if they make a little sense."

"Then let's say my interest in the French Revolution comes from an interest in the destiny of man."

"Mmmmm. . . . The destiny of man, no less. Isn't that a rather romantic phrase?"

"It is," I said. "I am interested in romance—the romance of civilization."

"Another lyrical metaphor, M. Schuman. However, we'll let it stand; it makes little difference. And how does the French Revolution fit into your romance of civilization?"

"I think constantly," I said, "of the change through which the

world is now passing. It is like moving from one geologic era into another. The change is profound, universal; it embraces everything. We have seen war on a scale undreamed of by Napoleon or Bismarck. Old states have crumbled, new states have been formed. Kings of ancient lineage have been driven from their thrones; obscure men have leaped up from the depths to seize supreme power. Everywhere popular movements involving millions have risen to shape history. Revolution and counterrevolution are altering the face of the earth. New horizons open for man but they are still shrouded in darkness. A social order which takes in the entire human race is split into warring camps. There are prophets proclaiming a new millennium, and Praetorian Guards at the foot of Caesar's throne. And what of the immediate years ahead? There are unmistakable portents that within the next decade or two we may again be plunged into a world-wide armed conflict, more vast in scope, more violent in character, more far-reaching in consequence than the last one."

My armpits were moist; yet, for some reason, the smile that now spread over Professor Boucher's gaunt face appeared reassuring.

"I am glad to hear you talking about the present," he said. "Only an interest in the life of the present should move one to investigate the life of the past. Go on, M. Schuman."

I took out my handkerchief and wiped the perspiration from my face and neck. This was a stiff exam.

"We are not the first generation of men to face great catastrophe or be stirred by great hopes," I said. "Aren't we all children of the French Revolution? Let parties, slogans and labels change as they will, the dream remains one for which that revolution found the most perfect phrase: liberty, equality, fraternity."

"You talk as if all history were contemporary history, M. Schuman."

"I don't quite mean it that way, Professor Boucher. But I do feel about the French Revolution like the Italian philosopher in that celebrated passage about Hellenic civilization: the problem is related to my being like the history of a bit of business in which I am engaged, or a love affair in which I am indulging or a danger which threatens me; I examine the problem with the same anxiety and am troubled with the same sense of unhappiness until I have succeeded in solving it; it solicits, attracts or torments me in the same way as the appearance of the adversary or of the loved one."

"And what are the problems of the French Revolution which haunt you like a love affair, young man?"

"I want to know more about the men, women and ideas involved

in that tremendous drama; about the wars which the revolution engendered; the ambitions it aroused, satisfied and frustrated. What a leap from the Bourbons to Robespierre! And what a leap from Robespierre to Bonaparte! You'll admit the problems are fascinating, Professor Boucher."

"Surely, young man, you are not vain enough to think you can solve those problems? No one has, and perhaps no one ever will."

"I have no such illusions, Professor Boucher. But I like to think about these problems, even if nothing useful comes of it."

"Perhaps something else is involved, M. Schuman. Sometimes we desire to relive past events as vividly as if they were contemporary history; this may enable us, if we are fortunate, to see contemporary history with that detachment which belongs to the past."

"Perspective is certainly necessary, don't you think?" The sense of being put through an exam vanished; it was more like talking with a friend. "Consider how myth, legend and propaganda—and the very nature of memory itself—have apparently distorted the past. We condemn certain actions today in the name of democracy without realizing that it was that kind of action which made democracy possible at all."

"That is not untrue, young man. We tend to idealize our collective past, very much as we idealize our personal past. Oh, don't smile! Someday you also will idealize your personal past, and perhaps more than others. Yes, we imagine that when we were young we were not so rude or amoral as the youth of today. We fancy also that when the world was younger, men were not so ruthless or amoral as today. Think how some people insist upon holding up for our unqualified admiration the closed system of the Middle Ages, romantically painted as so harmonious and integrated that we are expected to regret the Age of Reason."

"What interests me most about the French Revolution is the relation of dream to reality," I said.

"For example?"

"The swift, sanguinary changes from the *Social Contract* to Fouché's secret police."

"You think the French Revolution a failure, then?"

"Not at all," I said. "In spite of Napoleon and because of him, neither France nor Europe nor the rest of the world could ever return to the state of affairs which prevailed prior to the Revolution. The world never became as Condorcet wished it, but it could never again be as Louis XVI saw it. A great, perhaps impossible dream was frustrated; yet a real segment of it triumphed. The world *has* changed. When we speak of democracy today we cannot

avoid the ideals which inspired both the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and the American Constitution. It is the fate of those ideals which interests me."

"You want to trace the relation of dream to reality," Professor Boucher said. "Do you agree with Renan, then, that everything real is a distortion of the ideal?"

I hesitated to reply. Professor Boucher smiled through the brief silence, then said:

"I thought as much, young man. But remember, everything ideal is also a distortion of the real."

"I suppose one can say that, too," I said lamely.

"It is easy to say anything!" Professor Boucher countered. "I meant something different. Every historical reality is a compromise between a social dream and the stubborn facts of life. Compare the Sermon on the Mount with existing ecclesiastical institutions, or Rousseau's writings with our Third Republic. What is Christianity—the Sermon or the Vatican? What is democracy—the *Social Contract* or the Bourse? I am not making a moral statement, but wondering whether there may not be a natural law here, as true in public as in private life. The occupation of an adult man is often a compromise between his boyhood dreams, the obdurate material of the world and his innate limitations. At twenty, I wanted to be another Michelet; at sixty I am teaching elementary notions to boys like you."

"That is our good fortune," I said.

"Thank you, young man. It is settled then. You will work with me this coming year, and I promise you that you'll have no easy time of it. I make my students work very hard."

"I won't mind."

"Are you married?"

"No, sir."

"If you live alone," Professor Boucher said, "you ought to have no excuse for evading hard work. Good luck, then, M. Schuman, and au revoir."

He stood up and began to sort the papers on his desk. I rose and picked up my hat.

"One moment, young man," he said. "Have you thought of a theme for your thesis? I like my students to concentrate on some specific event or personality. It gives them something to work out solidly in detail, and me an opportunity to see how their minds operate. The thesis is due at the end of the year."

"I'd like to write about Condorcet," I said.

Professor Boucher's eyes peered out at me brilliantly from their shadowed caverns and he smiled faintly.

"Please resume your seat, M. Schuman," he said, taking his own. I sat down nervously. "Alors," he went on, "of all the possible subjects at your disposal, you choose to write about Marie Jean Antoine Nicolas Caritat, the Marquis de Condorcet. Most interesting. But why?"

"It's a queer idea, perhaps," I said, "but for a long time I've wanted to know why Condorcet felt it necessary to continue serving the Revolution which threatened his life; and why, hiding from the guillotine, he had to justify the ideals of the Revolution."

"But, good heavens," Professor Boucher exclaimed. "It's impossible to know such things. I'm afraid you haven't given me a very good reason."

"Then let us say that I have a very strong impulse to write on that theme."

"That is much better," he said. "Now at least we are in the realm of art without pretending it is the realm of science. Do your thesis on Condorcet, then, young man. At the same time—if you'll permit me to say so—I think you ought to change your course of study somewhat."

"In what way?" I asked.

"It's been said that in the beginning was the Word. Then it was said that in the beginning was the Deed. But nobody has ever said that in the beginning was the French Revolution."

"I never thought so," I said.

"But you have obviously felt it," said Professor Boucher. "Most people's imaginations do not go back in history more than the span of their personal lives. To think back a hundred years is already something of an achievement. But we are historians. If we are to see the present in proper perspective—if, as you said, we are to follow the romance of civilization—we must be able to visualize the whole career of man across the vistas of recorded history."

Professor Boucher rose from his chair, put his hands in his pockets and began walking up and down his small dusty office. For a moment he reminded me of my father, but the resemblance vanished as his deep voice rumbled on. He seemed now to be talking to himself, but every once in a while his piercing black eyes flashed under their deep sockets and riveted themselves on my face so forcibly that I knew he was shaping thoughts and words for my benefit. It was to be a day I would never forget. In the long run, it determined the specific nature of my work, the source of my livelihood and the preoccupation of my spirit. But it did more. I had studied with good teachers in Vienna; but in Professor Boucher I saw for the first time the teacher at his best. He did not have to

give me so much time and consideration outside the classroom; he could conveniently have terminated our interview at any number of earlier points. But he was inspired—as I realized now and was to learn abundantly later—with the genuine teacher's passion for sharing what he knows, for opening the unformed mind to the light of truth. The real teacher gives himself freely to those who learn from him, asking nothing in return; and in offering us his knowledge, thought and experience with an enthusiasm which is almost selfless, there is something akin to love.

"Young man," said Professor Boucher, walking up and down the dusty little office, "the other day I read a volume on the rise of European civilization. It consisted of five hundred pages. Do you know how many pages the French Revolution received? Twenty. Naturally, everything had to be told in the most general terms, for that is how history appears to us in the larger perspective—all contour and no detail. And in his brief summary of the Revolution, the author found it possible to name only one man—Napoleon. Rightly so. The moralist may think what he likes about Napoleon; you may look upon him as a liberator, a despot or both; but in the impersonal topography of that era he is by far the biggest mountain. And do you know how much space is given to the guillotine which Condorcet tried to escape? Half a sentence! Something like this: the Convention, weakened by violent conflicts which had ended in the execution of its most active members—and so on. If you are going to see things in correct proportion, that also is right. You have no idea how many heads have rolled across Europe in the course of time."

Professor Boucher now stood with his back to me, looking out through one of the narrow windows of the office. There was a tree outside, close to the building, and through the dust and glass it looked like a hastily sketched impressionist painting. On one of the boughs a little bird was dancing up and down. I wondered whether it was singing.

"If you want to think seriously about certain problems," Professor Boucher went on, "go back beyond the French Revolution. The struggle for liberty began long before that. Like all great historic events, the Revolution was a culmination as well as a beginning. If you start with Rousseau, you must go back to Locke. The Abbé Grégoire, that remarkable revolutionary priest who presided over the Convention in Paris, and Patrick Henry, who from his rostrum in Virginia called on Americans to battle for liberty, both invoked the heroic figure of Cromwell. Indeed, these invocations go back even further. The Gironde invoked the Gracchi and Brutus; Cromwell himself called on the Hebrew prophets; the

Albigenses remembered the doctrines of Arius. . . . Do you smoke, young man?"

"Yes," I said with a start.

"May I borrow a cigarette, please?"

I took out two cigarettes and lit them. In those days Parisians were always borrowing cigarettes or matches. In the orange flame of the sulphur match which I held for him, Professor Boucher's face seemed energetic and tender. He straightened up, inhaled the smoke with evident satisfaction, said *merci bien!* rather absent-mindedly and started pacing up and down again.

"What was I saying?" his deep voice rumbled. "Ah, yes. The idea of human rights, the rude outline of the democratic dream, antedates not only the American and French revolutions, but also England's Puritan revolution, Germany's Reformation, Italy's Renaissance. Do you know what, young man? I wish you had chosen some one other than Condorcet. I wish, for example, you had chosen Abélard."

"I've thought of Abélard," I said. "But, after all, I am not writing love stories."

Professor Boucher's warm laughter filled the room.

"But you are mistaken, M. Schuman," he said. "Abélard was a revolutionary of the first caliber. Remember his conflict with the prevailing system of thought which was beginning to lose its reason for existence. If he had not fought for man's right to use his brain, where would our science be? Remember, too, he was the teacher and friend of the republican leader Rienzi. As for the love story, do you imagine for a moment it was an ordinary love affair? In the sublime passion of Héloïse, which no obstacle could balk, there was not only the passion for a man, but the passion for an idea, the idea of freedom. Freedom for women. Freedom to think. Freedom to feel. Six centuries later, Rousseau called that novel of his which transformed our literature *The New Héloïse*. Do you think this was an accident?"

Professor Boucher looked out the window again. Reflected through the dusty glass, the sunlight had a mellow, nostalgic quality. The tree appeared more tentative than ever. The little bird was hopping from branch to branch; it was an ordinary brown sparrow. I suddenly became conscious of the musty smell of the books crowding the shelves around the room. Professor Boucher abruptly turned away from the window and faced me, his black, deep-set eyes shining.

"Do you follow me?"

"I think so."

"Well, then, don't you see we must consider the French Revo-

lution an episode in a long process? Unhappily, democracy in its various forms today is a most imperfect thing, but it is the best we have produced so far. And this incomplete, imperfect solution to the problem of liberty took no less than eight centuries to achieve. Think of that, young man!"

"I am thinking of it, sir."

"In that case, I hope you agree with me that you must at once supplement the course of study you plan. Go on with your French Revolution; write your thesis on Condorcet. But also, please, take my course in the foundations of European civilization. You cannot ignore the Middle Ages, and you certainly cannot ignore the development of Christianity as a basic force in the evolution of the West."

He walked hastily to his desk, leaned over and scribbled something on a piece of paper. He handed it to me, and I saw it was a list of books on the decline of the Roman Empire and the rise of Christianity.

"Read these," Professor Boucher said. "Then perhaps you won't simplify things so. You must begin to see history less melodramatically. You know there were at least two French revolutions between Mirabeau and Bonaparte. And you ought to know that certain Western concepts of liberty, equality and fraternity would have been impossible without the Christian idea."

"Thank you," I said. "I'll read these books at once."

"That's fine, young man. But do not simplify here either. Keep in mind that everything changes. The inert population of the Roman Empire is given new life by the Christian idea. Everything is revolutionized—personal relations, religious concepts, morality, thought, feeling. But observe that the new faith appears in Europe as an alien thing. That's something for you to think about. It is brought in by foreigners from the east; it is taught in a foreign language in the foreign colonies of the great cities. Nearly all the martyrs of this new and thoroughgoing revolutionary doctrine are foreigners. Why, do you know? Up to the beginning of the fourth century, Christianity remains almost unknown to the people who inhabit Europe, whose way of life it is destined to become! Then note how the doctrine is absorbed, rendered indigenous, altered from age to age until the same words no longer signify the same things. And always the changes are accompanied by the most violent conflict."

He stepped up to the window again.

"We need some air," he said and opened the window.

The tree now appeared marvelously green in the bright sunlight. The little brown bird, in a single movement which filled the one flash of time, leaped up, spread its wings and flew out of sight. A

soft breeze came into the room and the world seemed fresh and wonderful.

"There's one book there I particularly want you to read," Professor Boucher said, taking from his vest pocket a heavy gold watch of ancient make. "I want you to think in the most human terms of the men who established Christianity as Europe's mode of thought for a thousand years." He smiled and his eyes vanished into their caves under the overhanging black eyebrows. "The saints who hounded Arius to his death were not at all like St. Francis of Assisi. You will find them more like Robespierre."

He shook my hand warmly, wishing me luck in my studies, and said he would see me in class early Monday morning. I walked down the stairs with his book list in my pocket, a curious determination in my heart: on historical grounds, Professor Boucher had succeeded where, for different reasons, both Uncle Peter and Father had tried and failed: I was going to read the Lives of the Fathers. As I reached the bottom of the flight, I heard the professor's voice calling me: I turned around, and saw his thin, broad-shouldered figure at the head of the stairs.

"One more thing, young man," he said, smiling strangely. "Please keep in mind that the facts of history are not enough, nor is reason enough. When you study the past or contemplate the present, do so at least without despair in your heart, and if possible with all the hope it can muster."

He turned toward his office, and added over his shoulder, softly, almost like an afterthought, so that I just managed to catch the words as he disappeared:

"Man has only begun to shape the glorious future for which he is destined."

The street was crowded with people. It was growing late and I was hungry. I would get something to eat at a café, then I must buy one or two books. In my walks through the city I had noticed a bookstore on the Rue Saint-Honoré. I would go there.

10

Who ever loved that loved not at first sight?
—*Hero and Leander.*

I LINGERED LONG at the café, with true Viennese disregard of time, ate dinner, drank wine, watched crowds pouring through the street bent on pleasures of the night. It was lonely. I thought of various things which have been said about the great city since the day when Francis Bacon observed to Queen Elizabeth: *Magna civitas, magna solitudo*. They say men are lonely today because they have been torn away from the integrated preindustrial world held together by the religious ideal. O loneliness, thou my home. I once read in a Swiss author: the creative man, the artist of earlier times—Aeschylus, Dante, Phidias, Gruenewald—was lonely in his work, in his destiny as an artist, because he had to fulfill a task entrusted to him alone; but in the source of his creation he was not lonely, because not separated from the spiritual world around him which, by its very existence, gave his being meaning; today the artist is lonely because of the tragic separation of worlds, the contradiction between the creative man and the enslaved mass. That was an interesting idea. But I was thinking of a more fundamental, everlasting loneliness, nowhere described better than in Genesis. For here was man in the Garden of Eden with everything his heart could possibly desire; there were trees pleasant to the sight, good for food; there were rivers, animals, birds. All this was at man's disposal—paradise itself. Yet man was lonely. And God took pity on his loneliness, saying: it is not good that man should be alone. So God made another creature to keep man company, and brought her to man. And man said: this is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman.

When I paid my check and left the café, it was already dark. I walked to the Rue Saint-Honoré seeking the bookstore I had remembered. There it was, with one dim light burning inside. I tried the door. It was locked, and I began to shake it. A figure came out of the shadows within and as it neared the door I could see through the upper half, made of glass, that it was a woman. She

came to the door and looked out at me. Her face was oval and delicate, and though I could not make out the color of her eyes, I could see they were large and liquid. Her dark hair was bobbed in the fashion of the period; she wore a black jacket and skirt and a white waist. She smiled and waved her hands in a negative gesture through the glass door. I could make out her lips forming the word *fermé* . . . *fermé* . . . closed . . . closed. I shook the door violently; she leaned back her head, and though no sound came through, I saw she was laughing. She suddenly turned away, disappeared into the shadows and returned with a piece of paper which she held against the glass. It said:

"Please do not wreck the door. We close at seven o'clock. We shall be open at eight tomorrow morning. Au revoir."

I removed my hat, made an elaborate bow; then, standing close to the glass door so that it alone stood between my face and hers, I slowly and distinctly moved my lips to say:

"Au revoir. Tomorrow, then."

When I reached my little hotel room, I was still thinking of her delicate, oval face and the large, liquid eyes. What kind of voice did she have? I washed, got into my pajamas and dressing gown and sat down at my desk. Forget this nonsense; you have work to do. At one end of the desk stood a framed photograph of my father; at the other, one of my mother. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother. She is not your wife, though, and never will be; and if you get into any kind of mess, what will happen to your thesis on Condorcet and your career? Still, *The New Héloïse* settled one question long ago: the only true marriage is that of the heart. Why did Professor Boucher lay so much stress on Abélard? Along that edge of the desk which stood flush against the wall was a row of books I had brought from home. Here is one on the history of Western ideas. I open it to where it speaks at great length about Abélard, and here is a quotation from the great teacher himself: "Whence Saint Augustine, as well as other doctors of the church, holds that the secular arts and especially dialectic itself are absolutely necessary for the sacred Scripture. For that reason, indeed, the aforesaid doctor has dared to commend dialectic in such wise that he seems to profess it to be the only science, since he says it alone can make men know. He calls it 'the discipline of disciplines, which they call dialectic; it teaches how to teach, it teaches how to learn; in it reason presents itself and shows what it is, what it seeks and what it is worth.'" Abélard seeks to justify faith by reason. He claims that if reason gives access to truth it cannot be contrary to faith, for one truth cannot war with another. Perhaps that is what Professor Boucher was hinting at. Abélard was pur-

suing a dangerous business. Suppose reason, in the process of justifying faith, discovers flaws in faith?

It was getting late. I opened the window wide and let the night breeze sweep through the room with its spring fragrance. Tired and sleepy, I crept into bed and turned out the light. How still everything was, except for the light ticking of the clock. O fragmentary Faust! (I said to myself at twenty-three) you became old on the battlefield and have grown aged among your books and are still a child who needs to become a man. Out, out into the world, my friend! Gray is all knowledge, green the Tree of Life. Héloïse loved Abélard far more than he loved her. Is love between man and woman always unequal? Helga. What is that tune from *The Chocolate Soldier*? The bitch.

The strains of *Come, come, I love you only* were still ringing in my ears when I fell asleep and had a curious dream. In this dream I had an engagement to meet the lovely girl I had seen behind the glass door of the bookshop on the Rue Saint-Honoré. I knew she was waiting for me there, for I passed down the street and saw her face looking out anxiously through the glass. But I did not stop. I went on to the Place de la Concorde. A tremendous crowd filled the square. As I made my way through it, I realized a public meeting was in progress. Soon I reached the front ranks of the crowd in the center of the square, and faced the scaffold standing near the seated statue of Liberty. From this scaffold the Marquis de Condorcet was addressing the statue: "O Liberty!" he cried, pointing to it, "what crimes are committed in thy name!" A feeling of discomfort overcame me. I wanted to tell Condorcet he was plagiarizing Mme. Roland's immortal phrase, but my lips refused to move. Suddenly, I remembered that I had broken my engagement with the girl on the Rue Saint-Honoré.

I awoke in a great state of depression; but the sunlight streaming in through the open window, casting a golden glow over the room, made me feel better. I shaved and dressed. Downstairs, from the long, narrow table in the hallway, I picked up my mail. There was a letter from Uncle Peter warning me to watch my eating habits.

"The way you gobble your food," he said, "will kill you someday, as it has killed better men than you. Please be sensible, if not for your own sake, at least for the sake of those who love you, among the first of whom you may count your old Uncle Peter."

Father's letter asked all kinds of personal questions. Did I have a decent room? Was I budgeting my weekly income? How were the

professors at the Sorbonne? Then he added a long paragraph reminding me that, whatever else I might find in the study of history, I must on no account overlook the class struggle. Indeed, he said, long ago—when they were still scientists instead of mere apologists—the bourgeois historians themselves had described the historical development of the class struggle. The new idea which his cause had given the world, Father concluded, was that the existence of classes is bound up only with particular, historic phases in the development of production; that the class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat; and that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the abolition of classes and to a classless society.

Siegfried's letter was brief, and most of it was about Helga. She seemed to be enjoying life hugely as the wife of a rich, distinguished, senile aristocrat. She was running a salon now, attended by everybody who was anybody in Vienna. From Helga there was no letter. Why should she write me? Professor Gross, however, wrote me a long letter in praise of his friend Boucher. I ought to thank my stars, the old man said, to be able to study with a teacher like that. The old man's generosity moved me very much.

After a breakfast of croissant and coffee, hastily swallowed in spite of Uncle Peter's good advice, I rushed down to the Rue Saint-Honoré. The girl was behind the counter. She wore a new white shirtwaist and a gray skirt. Her face was beautiful.

"Good morning, Mlle. Françoise," I said.

"Babette Rochambeau is the name, monsieur," she said. "Is there anything I can do for you?"

Thank heaven for that clear, soft voice.

"I am a stranger in Paris, Mlle. Babette," I said. "You have no idea how much you can do for me."

"There are half a million strangers in Paris," she said. "I can't trouble about them all."

"Oh, I wouldn't dream of troubling you, Mlle. Babette. I merely want to purchase some books for my studies at the Sorbonne."

"Ah, another student," she said. "At your service, monsieur."

The door of a rear room creaked, opened and out came an old man with a greasy waistcoat and a dusty black skullcap. He looked suspiciously at us over the top of a pair of old-fashioned silver-rimmed spectacles. Neither of us spoke. He turned back into his room and closed the door behind him.

"Your father is a very distinguished-looking man," I said to Babette.

"Thank you," she said. "That's my employer. He looks as dis-

tinguished as a baboon, has the temper of a ravenous wolf and doesn't like me to chatter with customers. You wished to purchase some books?"

I took Professor Boucher's list from my pocket, and asked for two biographies of Condorcet, a volume on Abélard, three on the French Revolution and one on the rise of Christianity. Babette looked trim and efficient bustling among the filing cabinets and bookshelves. Once, to locate a volume, she started for a stepladder. I rushed to help her, lifted it to the required spot, held it as she climbed up; and while her hands searched the top shelves for a book on the early saints, I thought how beautiful her legs looked even in cotton stockings. She came down the ladder and, as I steadied it for her, our bodies touched accidentally. She was still smiling as she stepped behind the counter, wrapped the books for me and took my name and address for their files. I could not take my eyes off her and she must have noticed that; her face flushed, and, as the color subsided, the features became translucent. She could not have been more than twenty.

"You have a long day ahead of you," I said. "Imagine—working till seven o'clock."

"Today is Saturday," she said. "That's when I go home at noon."

"I suppose you walk home. It's such wonderful weather."

"I could hardly do that," she said. "I live in the suburbs."

"Don't you ever stay in the city Saturday afternoons?"

"Sometimes," she said.

I wanted to invite her to spend the afternoon with me, but lost my nerve. There will be other Saturday afternoons, I consoled myself as I tipped my hat to her and said *au revoir*. On the way home I planned to drop in at the bookshop the following week, but that turned out to be a vain hope. The classes at the Sorbonne, which I started early on Monday, and study at home kept me too busy. Professor Boucher turned out to be a stimulating teacher. He started us off with a sermon on the use of reason. Believe nothing, he said, except what you see for yourselves in the light of the evidence. Can you see with another man's eyes? Certainly not! Then how do you expect to see with his understanding? Distrust all arbitrary authority; never follow it blindly. Referring to the use of castor oil by the fascists of Italy (it turned out later he was fond of referring to contemporary events to clarify some historical generalization) he quoted John Locke to the effect that persecution is the most futile method of propagating ideas. It never convinces men; it merely turns them into hypocrites. Nobody, Professor Boucher insisted, has the right arbitrarily to determine

what his neighbors shall believe. Then, with a twinkle in his deep-sunk black eyes, he added:

"However, we may be entering an age—there have been such ages before—when men will not care what you believe secretly so long as you say and do what they tell you to."

At the conclusion of the class, he warned us not to wait till the end of the year to start on our theses, but to begin them at once. As far as I was concerned, the warning was superfluous. I could hardly wait to get to Condorcet and the problem he had raised in my imagination. I started to take notes for my thesis that very week. That was the week, also, in which I began to make acquaintances among my classmates.

One of them, doctor, was our mutual friend Russell Hague. He was certainly a debonair and charming devil in those days. At twenty-seven he was as tall as he is today, well over six feet, but fifty pounds lighter. Even then his thin face had the keen, hawk-like look and the raised cheekbones indicating that the sun and earth which nourishes you Americans also nourished the Indians.

The moment Hague discovered I knew some English, he pounced on me. How he discovered it, I don't know; he always had a gift for finding anything which could be useful to him, and in those days he was determined to learn everything possible from Europe. At first he simply offered to make a deal with me: I was to teach him my native language; in return he would initiate me into the vigorous mysteries of Anglo-American. I was inspired by his practical sense. What is a study of Western civilization worth without a knowledge of English? We began to see each other several times a week to exchange lessons. Then we became good friends, opened our minds freely to each other and now and then went on drinking bouts.

Hague used to kid me about my preoccupation with Condorcet, calling him the ghost of Hamlet's father. Sometimes he would pick me up at my room late at night to take me away from that damned marquis, he said, long enough for a couple of drinks which would clear the cobwebs from my brain. Then he would ask me with genuine interest how far I had got with my thesis. Well, I had only started. The notes pile up on my desk in the little hotel room, and in them Marie Jean Antoine Nicolas Caritat, Marquis de Condorcet, is just starting out in life. He is a mathematician at sixteen, famous in that field at twenty-two, and quite a handsome fellow into the bargain. It is the wonderful Age of Enlightenment. The whole of Europe is in great intellectual ferment. France is moving toward the Revolution. A typical revolutionary of the times, Condorcet's

interests are universal. He is attracted to science, philosophy and literature—even Napoleon wanted to be a writer!—but most of all he is interested in social work. He is among the first to fight for the abolition of Negro slavery.

Hague used to hear me tell this story with his strange silence. I had only just begun to learn that he thought most when he talked least. Hague's conversation was most fluent when he drank, and in those far-off days his capacity for alcohol was truly heroic. It smacked of *Beowulf* and other great sagas. Eventually it found its supreme poet in Hemingway, who, better than any other writer of our times, has conveyed the nostalgia which underlay that drinking, the oblique protest against things evil, the unformed desire for things good. Hague had fought in the war and was disappointed in its aftermath. Following the Armistice, he remained in Paris. He had plenty of money from his father, a rich New York newspaper and magazine publisher. It was this father who kept Hague in Europe in more ways than one. For if you listened to Hague—especially after five whiskies or one absinthe—that father was a hard, uncultured, unimaginative, puritanical, money-grubbing barbarian who understood nothing whatever about the finer values of life. In that dry, dead-pan humor of understatement which is part of the American genius, Hague could and did talk of business and puritanism with the most annihilating irony. He considered himself an exile from the fleshpots of New York, and a pilgrim to the spiritual shrines of Europe. To spite his father's addiction to business, the son dabbled in the arts; to spite his father's puritanism, he drank like a fish and wenched like a rabbit. These things gave him a pleasure tinged with despair. He laughed when I said they were signs of an American Sturm und Drang period, turbulent prelude to a literary and artistic renaissance. At that time, of course, we Europeans felt rather patronizing toward your country. I thought of Hague wandering among Europe's art museums, books, literary circles, bars, boudoirs and bordellos as a Roman imbibing the culture of the Greeks. But such are the limitations of our vision that I failed to carry the simile to its proper conclusion. It did not occur to me that Rome rises as Greece declines, and that one day I would be a minor Polybius in exile on your hospitable shores singing the praises of your Constitution.

Soon I discovered another side to Hague, evidenced by his presence at the Sorbonne. Despite his revolt against all he imagined his father stood for, he had enough good instinct to realize where his roots were. Once the first flush of excitement over his new-found freedom wore off, his private revolution entered its second phase, as all revolutions are bound to do. After the uncompromising

repudiation of the old and the anarchic unleashing of all repressed energies and desires comes the period of consolidation; the new requires its own law and order. Hague stopped thinking of his father's past and began thinking of his own future. Since he was destined to inherit the family business, he determined to prepare himself for it. Despite his large allowance, which freed him from the necessity of working, he obtained a job on one of the American newspapers. He concealed his very sensible plan with a grin and a quip. "I'm going to be an editor if it kills me," he said. He then supplemented his newspaper job with courses at the Sorbonne, where he was received on the strength of a Harvard degree. He explained this step by saying that "you can't learn everything from the ticker tape."

Hague's conduct impressed me deeply. For all his money, there was nothing of the European aristocrat about him. He had a healthy respect for useful work, and knew how to do it. I had only to watch him in the classroom or at his newspaper office, where I sometimes picked him up at midnight for a drink, to realize that he enjoyed his capacity for work, which was native to him, far more than his vices, which he had donned like a mask. It was Professor Boucher, however, who called my attention to the long-range effect of the young Americans who swarmed in Paris at that time. I was having dinner at his home, to which I was occasionally invited, when Professor Boucher said:

"Someday these young men who seem to be merely playing here will be of incalculable value to their country. They will know Europe as no diplomat or commercial attaché can. They will know it from having come to manhood in it, and from having loved it with all the generous ardor of their youth."

11

We will not anticipate the past; so mind, young people—our retrospection will be all to the future.
—*The Rivals.*

MY YEAR IN PARIS turned out better than I had expected. Professor Boucher worked us as hard as he had threatened, but I liked that. I liked Hague, too. He was a stimulating and devoted friend. There were weekly letters from home; and though the situation in Vienna was no better, Father was in high spirits and full of fight for his ideal. Then there was Condorcet, whose story fascinated me on its own account, as the theme of a paper which I hoped would advance me in my profession and as an alluring symbol which I could not decipher but which haunted me as a vague index of human aspiration, injustice and faith. And best of all—there was Babette.

I began to visit the little bookshop on the Rue Saint-Honoré almost daily. At first I pretended to be looking for books, but I gave up that pretense when I saw I was not unwelcome. Babette and I used to chat for hours at the counter. I told her a little about my war experiences, my work at the Sorbonne and my life in Vienna—to which, I assured her, I was returning at the end of the year, never to see Paris again. She told me a little about her life in the suburbs with an invalid mother and a father who was a retired civil servant with a small pension. Sometimes our talks would be interrupted by a customer, a messenger with a package or her grumpy old employer, who would poke out his unshaven, grizzled, bespectacled, triple-chinned face from his workroom to ask Babette sharply how business was going. This would fluster Babette and embarrass me.

One day she told me I must not come to the shop any more except to buy books. Her employer was furious at the amount of time she was giving me. He paid for that time and felt he owned it. If this nonsense continued, he warned her, she would be fired. I asked Babette if I could visit her at home in the evening.

"No, no!" she said. "My parents are old-fashioned and strict. They wouldn't like that at all. They have other plans for me. They

are encouraging several suitors for my hand—nice little middle-aged papas with curled mustachios, perfumed bald spots and solid incomes. I detest every one of them, but I suppose that's how I'll be married in the end."

The following day, however, was Saturday, so we arranged to meet at noon in a café for lunch. When the appointed hour came, I found Babette sitting in a booth away from the crowd, looking very beautiful. It was good to be with her. She wore a brown dress which came down to the knees, and her large, dark, liquid eyes gleamed with pleasure.

We ordered stewed lapin for lunch and talked of trifles. Then she suddenly said:

"I suppose you are engaged."

"Yes."

"What kind of girl is she?"

"She's not a girl any more. She's rather old. Yet sometimes she appears very young."

"How strange! What does she look like?"

"She's the majestic type," I said.

"Bigger than you?"

"Much bigger."

"Doesn't it embarrass you to be seen with her?"

"On the contrary, it is she who is embarrassed."

"An educated woman?"

"Very."

"More than you?"

"Infinitely."

"I suppose she is one of those modern career women," Babette said. "What is she interested in?"

"Everything: politics, economics, literature, art, even philosophy."

"What a woman! Hasn't she any regular profession?"

"You might call her a kind of certified public accountant."

"You haven't got a snapshot of her by chance?" Babette said. "I'd love to see it."

"I never carry one. She's with me in spirit all the time."

"What's her name?"

"Clio."

"Short for Cleopatra?"

"No, that's her complete name. Clio."

"Are you going to marry her?"

"Till death do us part."

"She's a lucky wench."

"I'm the lucky one," I said.

Babette's face clouded and she began to drink her demitasse in silence. I should not have played that silly game.

"Babette," I said. "I am not engaged."

"Then why did you lie to me?"

"I didn't. There is a Clio in my life. She's the muse of history."

"Is that all?" When Babette laughed her teeth looked very white against her olive skin.

"I am married to her for life."

"What has that to do with me?"

"She is the most jealous woman in the world. She won't let me marry anybody else."

Babette leaned back and surveyed me ironically.

"What are you looking at?" I said.

"I'm trying to see what there is about you to make you so conceited. Did anyone ask you to marry them?"

"Nobody."

"Well, I won't, you may be sure of that," said Babette. "I've got my own life to live, and I intend to live it in Paris."

I kissed her hand.

"Now that we have this straight," she said, "would you like to know how I feel about you? I think of you every day when I get up and every night when I go to sleep and all the time between."

"That's the way I think about you, Babette. But I was afraid to tell you."

"Don't be afraid," she said. "I am young. Many things will happen to me in my life, and in the end I shall no doubt settle down as a plump matron of a large suburban family. Before that happens I want to know what love is—love entirely of my own choosing. Oh, I know, it might have been someone else. I admit my heart was ready for it. But it happens to be you."

"Babette," I said, "I love you as much as I can love anyone now. But you know I'm going to leave Paris at the end of the year. Then we shall never see each other again."

"Perhaps it will be better that way," she said.

I took her in my arms and kissed her, oblivious of the surroundings.

After lunch we went to the Folies-Bergère. Later we walked through the streets talking and laughing. At dusk we had an apéritif at a café and I took her to the metro. At the entrance we kissed au revoir. I walked home wondering how she spent Sundays with her family in the suburbs.

That night, when I met Hague as usual at the café in the Rue Lafayette, he said:

"You look swell. What happened to you?"

"Santa Claus gave me a wonderful Christmas present ahead of time," I said. "How are Hamlet and his father?"

"If you mean my old man," he said, "he's turning out to be okay. The paper gave me an interview with him to edit. It was surprisingly good. He told a bunch of reporters in his Washington office that he believed in the future of America. That's an old line, but it was the way he said it. For the first time, he seems to be thinking of something except himself. And how is the ghost of Hamlet's father?"

"The Marquis de Condorcet is doing well," I said.

"Where have you got the old buffalo now?"

"Well, if you must know, my thesis has reached the point where Condorcet is in Paris, a genial, enthusiastic fellow full of revolutionary ideals. He makes dozens of friends among the leading men and women of his time. What men, what women and what a time! He hobnobs with Voltaire, Turgot and d'Alembert in the days when the world is full of spring. Like so many of his friends, he becomes a revolutionary propagandist, proclaiming and preparing the great day of universal liberation. It is the morning of modern thought. The philosophers are doing the *Encyclopédie* and Condorcet contributes to it. He is busy in scientific and literary circles, too. He does a book on mathematical probability, a biography of Turgot, another of Voltaire. And in the midst of this activity, he gets married. What a lucky devil! Sophy de Grouchy is one of the loveliest and wisest women of her time, a good woman, a woman of splendid character. Condorcet is very happy. Then, as he turns forty-six, another great happiness comes to him. The States-General is convoked, the people rise, the Bastille falls. A vast exultation sweeps over the land; the era of liberty, equality and fraternity is proclaimed. The Revolution for which Condorcet and his friends have been working, for which the people of France have been longing, which history has been preparing for eight hundred years is here at last. And now Condorcet urges with all the ardor of his nature that equality of political rights means nothing without equality in fact. This, he insists, is the final aim of social art, since inequality of riches, status and education are the main causes of all evils. Everywhere, the people surge forward to demand the rights they have so long been denied. It is like the beginning of the world. Everything is full of chaos and creation. The old is destroyed, the new leaps up on every hand; the past is dead, the future seems endlessly wonderful."

"I know," Hague said, filling his glass with Scotch. "I learned that at school. How does it go? Europe at that time was thrilled

with joy, France standing on the top of golden hours and human nature seeming born again. Are you in love?"

"What a question."

"I've never heard you talk with so much pep," he said.

The following week I met Babette every evening at seven outside the bookshop and walked her to the metro. We both looked forward to our next Saturday afternoon together. When the time came, I fell victim to the old Schwaermerei. Friday I worked late into the night on the Condorcet thesis. The next day I rose late, feeling tired. But I was so full of my subject that I went at once to my desk. I became absorbed in the work; it was two o'clock before I realized this was Saturday afternoon, that I had an engagement with Babette. Full of regret and anxiety, I ran down to the Rue Saint-Honoré. The store was closed. I should have thought of that. I hurried to the café where we had lunched the previous week, but there was no sign of Babette. I spent a miserable Sunday with Hague. He tried so hard to cheer me up that I finally had to tell him what happened. He laughed pleasantly and was altogether sympathetic; but he irritated me when he said:

"Don't let it get you down, Paul. It will only whet her appetite."

I made allowances for the phrase and did not believe a word of it. I was furious with him, myself, Condorcet—the whole world except Babette, toward whom I had been thoughtless and cruel. Immediately after school on Monday, I went down to the bookshop. Babette received me coolly, listened to my excuses in silence. These were poor enough. I tried to explain that I had some work to do for the Sorbonne.

"What was her name?" Babette finally said.

"You read too many novels, my little cabbage," I said. "There's no other woman, I swear."

"Except Clio?"

"If you must know," I said in despair, "it was a man who kept me—a man named Condorcet."

For the first time she smiled.

"I didn't know you were that way, Paul."

"No, no, Babette! This man is dead! He was a figure in the French Revolution. I'm writing a thesis about him."

"He's a rival anyway," she said. "He kept you away from me. We have only our Saturday afternoons together, and on top of all the trouble we have with my employer and my parents, you've got to bring in this Condorcet of yours. I detest him."

"You'll like him when you get to know him," I said.

The door of her employer's workroom began to creak on its unoiled hinges. As it opened slowly, Babette whispered:

"Take me to the metro station this evening. Now get out before I am fired."

That night I met Hague at the café on the Rue Lafayette and he wanted to know how things came out. When I told him Babette had forgiven me, he said:

"She's a good girl. But she does owe Condorcet a sock in the eye. How is the old bastard?"

I told him how far I had advanced with my thesis. Condorcet, now that the Revolution is in full swing, throws himself into it with all his energy. He is everywhere; he does everything; he pours out propaganda pamphlets, suggests all kinds of reforms, plans a constitution for the new social order. Always his great passion is to serve the Revolution. He is a member of the Paris Commune, then of the Legislative Assembly. He writes most of the Assembly's addresses. And through it all, Condorcet is deeply interested in eliminating inequality in education. He is facing the Assembly, outlining a plan for popular instruction such as no nation had ever dreamed of, when war is declared against the reactionary foes of France who have assaulted it. Condorcet wants this to be a great war of universal liberation. It is he who coins the famous slogan: *War to the palace, peace to the cottage!* He envisions revolutionary France marching across Europe wielding the sacred sword of justice to bring freedom and enlightenment to the people everywhere. That vision, I concluded, was destined to a strange fulfillment in an unexpected way by an unexpected man—Napoleon.

Hague had listened to all this with flattering attention. Now he swallowed another glass of whisky and said quietly:

"That man Condorcet is going to get you into trouble. I can smell it. Have you been getting any mail from home?"

"Yes. From my father, from friends. Vienna is in the dumps."

"My friends write me New York is having a high old time. Have you ever seen the Catskills?" He took another drink. "No, how could you. They're mighty pretty hills. We've got a house there. An old stone house, Dutch. You look out the windows on one side, and you can see old Minnewaska hitting the sky. Minnewaska. An Indian name." He poured a drink for me.

"Don't tell me you've got Indians there," I said. "I know better."

"Indians? Hell, no! We've got farmers. Old Dutch families. A great lot. Take old man Ousterhoudt, for instance. A great guy. Suppose they aren't Dutch? Take the Houghs, the Messingers, the

Albees. Swell people. Did you ever see dawn in the Catskills, Paul? That's something."

"Dawn is the same everywhere. It's wonderful on the Semmering."

"The hell with the Semmering. There's no dawn like the one over the Catskills."

I saw he was getting homesick.

"I used to get up at dawn," he said. "Once in a while. In the summertime. I'd open the window wide and breathe in that wonderful Catskill air."

"Like the air of Paris in spring."

"You're crazy. There's nothing in the world like Catskill air."

Home is where you have grown up, where your forefathers lived, where your best friends are, where your children will grow up. Home is a past, a present and a future: an idea that whispers to you from every tree in the woods, every blade of grass in the field, every pavement, every lamppost of the city street. New York for Hague, Paris for Babette, Vienna for me.

"In the summer," Hague said, "the pine forest across the road from us is green and cool and deep. In the winter the snow is white and deep. The air is so silent you can hear yourself breathe."

"Like the Semmering," I said.

"No, nitwit. It's altogether different from anything in the world. How should you know? I used to take a girl into that pine forest. Do you know any American girls? Then you don't know anything. When you get into that pine forest, the trees shut out the sky. A soft gloom surrounds you. It's like a great natural cathedral. Have you ever read *Main Street*?"

He took another drink.

"Certainly," I said. "Haven't you?"

"I read it the other day."

"You got around to it rather late," I said. "The book is three years old."

"What the hell's the difference? It's still good, isn't it? I read it and felt like crying. I haven't felt like crying since I was ten. How do you explain that, you bloody old explainer?"

"It made you homesick."

"Is that so?" Hague said ironically. "The book pokes fun at everything back home, so it makes me homesick."

"It's a great satire," I said. "You don't satirize what you don't love."

"Your sentence structure is terrible," he said. "Try again."

"When you hate something, you ignore it or fight it," I said.

"When you love a thing, when you want to see it survive, grow, reach its highest peak, you either praise it or poke fun at it."

"You're drunk," Hague said, taking another drink.

"That's what probably made you feel like crying," I said.

"You mean the book's love for the U.S.A.?"

"That's what I mean," I said. "Why don't you make this drink your last and come home?"

"So that's the explanation!" Hague said sarcastically. He filled his glass and toasted me. "Well, here's to Vienna and Dr. Paul Freud," he said, swallowing the drink in one gulp.

We paid our checks and went out. It was late. We lived in different sections of the city, so we parted at the bridge near the Tuileries.

"You come and visit me in New York next year," Hague said.

"Of course," I said. What was the use of arguing with him in that state? "Get to bed, Russell. Good night."

"So long, Paul," he said. "Don't let that bastard Condorcet keep you up all night."

When I got home, I stretched out on the bed in my clothes. She thinks of me all the time. I think of her all the time, too. A tune floated through my head from Lehar's *Beautiful Is the World*. Then I felt wide awake and went to my desk. I felt like working off the intense energy which now filled my whole being. The street outside was quiet. Within the room there was only the tick of the alarm clock, saying time never stops. I picked up my paper and began writing. Now the Revolution is a political battlefield, the raging arena of conflicting interests, passions and ideas. At last the king is gone, the republic proclaimed. Condorcet helps to found it. He has been among the first to demand it after the king's flight to Varennes. It is he who has drawn up the memorandum by which the Assembly suspends the monarch and calls together the National Convention. Now see the dilemma which confronts Condorcet. His republican sentiments alienate his constitutional friends. But he cannot work with the Jacobins either; they have not yet come out against the monarchy. He begins to lose friends; he belongs to no party. When he is elected to the Convention, by no less than five departments, it is a personal tribute. In the Convention his troubles really begin. He votes the deposed king guilty of conspiring against the liberty of the people and worthy of any penalty—short of death. This infuriates the Jacobins, who now clamor for the death penalty. But Condorcet also infuriates the Girondists by voting against their proposal to submit the monarch's case to a popular referendum. Condorcet is in a very dangerous spot. He does not know that a period of revo-

lutionary terror stimulates universal suspicion, that friends are spared least of all; he does not know when to stop being independent. He criticizes the constitution adopted by the Convention, which he did not draw up; he opposes the apparently extreme conduct of the Jacobins; he protests against the arrest of the Girondists. This seems to him a risky business: if any man can be arrested for differences of opinion, who is safe? Certainly Condorcet is no longer safe. By protesting against the arrest of the Gironde, he seems to place himself in their camp. That is how his enemies are bound to look upon it at a time when everything is possible except neutrality. Condorcet is accused of conspiring against the Republic which he was among the first to demand. He is condemned. Sensational, utterly false reports are spread about him. He is declared outside the law. That means the guillotine. From the shadow of that immense knife, Condorcet escapes and goes into hiding.

12

*A violet in the youth of primy nature,
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
The perfume and suppliance of a minute.*

—Hamlet

ON SATURDAY AFTERNOONS, which we now spent regularly together, Babette made me aware of the world with an intensity I had never before experienced. She was sensitive to all those visual and sensuous aspects of things which my introspective spirit is likely to ignore, and it gave her great pleasure to educate me in simple matters of everyday existence which are the genius of the common man and the salt of life. She would point out people to me on the street, strangers whose secrets she tried to read from their faces; she would lecture me severely on the need for going over l'addition item by item before paying it; and, succeeding where Uncle Peter had failed, she prevailed upon me to eat my food more slowly and with greater respect.

We walked through the streets of Paris together and I awoke to its spatial equilibrium, corresponding to the equilibrium of the climate and of Babette's heart. And through her I discovered that here, perhaps more than in any other city on earth, people really respected your private life. In permitting you peacefully and tolerantly to do what you actually desired, they showed a true understanding of morality; for they left the choice of each action to you, and thereby left you all responsibility for its inevitable consequences.

Then, too, for all her youth, Babette conducted herself with the most extraordinary dignity. As she took me around the city—not to its historic monuments, but the cafés, theaters, concerts, dances and parks where the life of the present went on gaily—I soon learned that this dignity was typical of the people. Our Viennese were romantic; the Parisian was sober and full of self-respect. Here is a man hovering around our table at a restaurant. He comports himself with such dignity and authority that you think he is some distinguished guest. Then he removes a plate from your table, and you think he must be at least the manager. Finally, as you rise to leave,

he asks you, without the least loss of pride, for a *pourboire*; and you realize he is a waiter. But he is first of all a man from the ranks of the French people, with the memory of 'Ninety-three in his blood, and in his heart the ineradicable belief in the rights of man.

Before I had known Babette I was aware that the culture of the entire world could be found in Paris. But I imagined this culture was in the paintings of the artists, the books of the writers and the fine manners of the elite. Wandering through Paris on those Saturday afternoons with Babette, I learned that this culture was also in the streets and market places. Its essence was a freedom of the spirit, a tolerance of everything and everyone, a passion for experience of every kind. All life had dignity for Babette; nothing was without it; nothing was too trivial for our interest, too unworthy of our respect. Every action, whether her own or mine or that of strangers, evoked in her some degree of regard, be it the reading of poetry with you, or weighing a cabbage in her hand at Les Halles, or cutting a *filet mignon* at a restaurant or explaining to you why she hated Mussolini. Babette believed in life: in herself, in you, in people, in things. Though she would never write a line of literature or paint a picture, she was an artist. It was in being what she was that she taught me something about the French people: their formal arts had reached such heights because they had the art of life in such unique abundance. I suppose that is the reason why I can never think of Paris without thinking of Babette, or of Babette without thinking of France.

By July, when the summer heat had relaxed all our faculties and my work at the Sorbonne had been cut to a minimum, Babette reached the point where she wanted to see my little hotel room. There are no difficulties about such matters in Paris, and I took her there one Saturday after lunch. We kissed a long time, then she disengaged herself from my arms and began to look around. She criticized the curtains, which the hotel had supplied; and admired my row of books, which she could not understand. She considered my father's photo in silence and concluded that she liked him very much; then, holding that of my mother in her hand for a long time, she said quietly:

"You are right. She was beautiful." She looked again and added: "She was a very good woman, too."

"You are beautiful yourself, Babette," I said, "and very good."

Babette did not reply. She began to straighten out the papers on my desk, and I could see she was looking for something. At last she gave up with a laugh.

"When are you going to show me your paper on my rival—what's his name?"

"The Condorcet theme isn't done yet," I said. "Besides, it would only bore you."

This made Babette angry. She said it was an insult to her intelligence, a typical piece of masculine conceit to imagine that anything that was good enough to occupy my mind was not good enough for hers. Didn't I know that a woman in love wants to know every little thought that passes through her man's mind? Just because it is her lover's thought, it is bound to interest her, even if it is about a dull fellow like what's-his-name. Indeed, she insisted, she would be just as interested if my paper were about the brewing of beer or how to count the sand in Algiers. So it is Condorcet: very well, no secrets, then!

"If that fellow is going to share your heart with me," Babette said, "I want to know all about him."

"You'll find it dull," I pleaded.

"I thought you are going to be a teacher," she persisted. "What good are you if you can't explain a little thing like this to me?"

I had no choice. We sat down on the bed and, holding her hands in mine, I outlined the story of the marquis as best I could. First I told her briefly who he was and what he had done up to the point where he was declared hors de loi and had to flee from the guillotine. From there I went on in greater detail, and to my surprise and delight, Babette listened attentively, her large, dark eyes watching my face as I spoke. The moment Condorcet is in danger, his friends go to Mme. Vernet, widow of a famous sculptor, and beg her to give him asylum. That extraordinary woman does not even ask the name of the man she is to conceal. Once she is assured that he is honest, she says:

"Let him come, and don't lose a moment. While we are talking he may be seized!"

She conceals Condorcet in her house. While he is there, the Girondists, now clearly opposed to the second and more radical revolution, are executed by the guillotine. They go to the scaffold singing:

Better death than slavery,
That is the motto of the French!

Under these circumstances, Condorcet realizes that his presence exposes Mme. Vernet to terrible danger.

"I am outlawed," he says to her. "If I am discovered, you will meet the same fate as myself. I must not stay."

"Sir," Mme. Vernet replies, "the Convention has the right to place a man outside the law. It has not the right to place him outside humanity. Stay here."

To make sure that Condorcet does not leave her home, she has his movements watched as a protective measure. And now comes what is perhaps the most fascinating part of the whole story. It is in this hiding place, from which he expects at any moment to be dragged to the guillotine, that Condorcet writes his book called *A Historic Tableau of the Progress of the Human Spirit*. It justifies in the most ardent terms the ideals of the Revolution which seeks to kill its author. We shall come to that later. It will be the climax of my thesis, as it is the climax of Condorcet's life. Meantime, even in hiding he tries to serve the Revolution in every way he can. In Mme. Vernet's house there lives a Jacobin named Marcel. He is aware that the Terror is after Condorcet's head, yet he does not denounce him. The man is lax in his revolutionary duty; he suffers from an excess of humane sentiment. Through him Condorcet anonymously submits to the Committee of Public Safety several memos on how to conduct the war against the coalition of despotic states which are seeking to exterminate the Republic. And from this same hideout at 21 Rue Servandoni, Condorcet also smuggles to the revolutionary committee on public education the solution of several problems in higher mathematics. In spite of his personal fate, he wants the Revolution to survive, to triumph, to bring happiness to men everywhere. Until the moment when his head falls, it is without reservation at the service of the Revolution which wants to slice it off.

And now Condorcet learns that the home which has given him asylum is being watched by agents of the government. He slips away one night, and tries to hide in the château of a man he had once befriended. That man refuses to help. For three days and three nights, Condorcet is compelled to hide in the thickets and stone quarries of Clamart. He finally emerges on the morning of April 7, 1794, his clothes torn, his leg wounded and hungry as a dog. In this condition, he enters a tavern and orders food.

"That's as far as I've got in my paper," I said to Babette. "And speaking of food—aren't you starved?"

"I am," she said. "But it's late, and if I don't get home in time for supper, Father will raise the roof. Thank you for telling me about my rival. You'll tell me the rest when your paper is finished, won't you, Paul?"

I promised I would, kissed her and took her out to a metro station.

The following Saturday it rained heavily. I looked out my window at the rivulets of water running down the street and wondered whether Babette would be at our usual rendezvous. After

breakfast at the bar below, I got my mail. There was only one letter—from Uncle Peter. After some gossip, some complaints about the depressing state of Vienna and some questions about myself, his letter went on to say:

"Your generation here is acting as if it had just been let out of prison. I suppose that's to be expected after years of war and captivity. Everyone talks of freedom; everyone rushes around trying to get a job or a sinecure—especially a sinecure. But it's not so easy these days. Our banking system, overexpanded during the inflation, has collapsed; the streets are full of discharged bank employees trying to start a new life over again—for the third time. A lot of young men who came out of the war without a scratch have been completely crushed by the peace. The prevailing spiritual debauch takes various forms. There are those who interpret their new-found freedom as a mandate to practice every conceivable kind of vice. Believe me, Paul, they won't recover from *that* error. Never! Others have become skeptical of everything that has its roots in the past. The fools! They will simply have to rediscover for themselves the oldest truths. And for that rediscovery they will have to pay a terrible price, for it is at great cost that those truths were originally discovered. Unfortunately, they will not be the only ones who will pay for their folly; we shall all have to bear the burden. . . . As for those false prophets who promise the younger generation a secular millennium just over the horizon—the less said of them the better. I know how much you love your father. . . . And what a mix-up! The freedom-intoxicated youngsters worship a golden calf labeled *new*: the new society, the new romanticism, the new psychology, the new songs, games, plays and dances, *Panta rhei*—everything is in flux. The True Faith alone stands unmoved, like the eternal rock it is. It will survive these errors, follies and evils, as it has always survived them in the past."

I stepped out into the deluge and wondered if Babette had an umbrella. I did not want her soaked in this rain. I stepped into a store and bought her one. Then I thought: what a romantic present! So I stepped into a bookshop on the Rue de Rivoli and bought her a slim copy of poems by Verlaine, which I inscribed "*con amore*."

Babette was waiting at the café, and I was glad to see she had no umbrella. I gave her both presents, and she rewarded me with a kiss for each. The umbrella pleased her more than the poems.

"It's wonderful of you to give me the book, Paul," she said. "But that you should think of my comfort! I didn't know you could have that much practical sense."

After lunch she said:

"It's a pity you must take summer courses. You've never seen the country outside of Paris, have you?"

"No, I haven't had the time."

"Then let's go to Fontainebleau this afternoon."

"It's raining."

"What of it? I love the rain. It will be nice to smell the newly washed trees."

As the train rolled through the suburbs, the deluge came down heavily and the world seemed gray and forlorn. But Babette's face was shining and she held my hand to her heart all the way. From the station at Fontainebleau we took a taxi to an inn Babette suggested. The taxi bounced through the rain at terrific speed, but that only made her laugh. We entered a small restaurant with dark, heavy oak paneling and red-checkered tablecloths and dried ourselves by the open fireplace. For lunch Babette ordered roast duck, covered with a rich dark-brown sauce. The Chablis warmed our blood. We drank a full quart of it, and afterward ordered cognac with our black coffee. Babette's face was flushed and her black eyes sparkled. Then something happened which I can hardly explain. I am never especially bold about such matters: *au contraire*. Yet now, without saying a word, I stood up from the table, went to the landlord and asked for a room. He told us to follow him. Babette only smiled, picked up her umbrella and book and went up the stairs first. The landlord opened a door for us with a huge old-fashioned iron key, bowed and disappeared down the stairs.

The room was chilly. Its gloom was increased by the sheets of rain sliding down the windowpanes like endless gray curtains. Babette stretched out on the bed and lit a cigarette, smiling. I lit one, too, and sat down on the edge of the bed.

"Read me some poems, Paul," she said.

I read her several from Verlaine. I remember she liked one especially: The white moon besets the forest; from each bough emerges a voice under the foliage. O best-beloved! the pool, profound mirror, reflects the silhouette of the black willow wherein the wind laments. Let us dream: it's the hour. A vast and tender astonishment seems to descend from the firmament like white planets of light: it's the exquisite hour!

When I had completed the final line, Babette's warm arms, now bare, enfolded me.

Later we lay back on our pillows, our naked bodies slightly apart, and looked at each other in happy silence. Ecstasy: when we want to describe the most intense joy of which we are capable, we think of it as standing outside ourselves. Oh, real love is not blind! It opens one's eyes. Out of the hundreds of people I meet and

see only vaguely, you stand out, clear, unique, inexpressibly wonderful. I see you truly, for the first time and, oh, how lucidly! Every detail of your body, every hair on your head, the changing light in your immense, liquid, loving eyes, the gateway to your soul. You are not a mere name, a citizen of the Republic, an employee: you exist at last as yourself, the one and only, for whom there cannot possibly be a substitute. And it is love alone that can make me see you, and that tells me without a word, with a silent authority and joy which allows no question and no doubt, that you are infinitely precious, that it is an infinite privilege to love you. . . .

Then suddenly, without warning, a tear rolled down Babette's face.

"Darling! why are you crying?" I said. "Have I made you unhappy?"

"I am very, very happy, Paul. But I'm afraid perhaps I have not brought you happiness. Forgive me; I am ignorant; this is my first time."

I took her in my arms and assured her over and over again how wonderful she was, how much happiness she had brought me, and she smiled again. Then I thought: This is the magic of love, that it enables us to transcend our egotism, to leap over the barriers which, even under the most favorable circumstances, separate one human being from another, that it blesses us with the gift of wishing another to be happy.

I lay back on the pillow, and held Babette close to me and we talked softly about nothing at all and about the most wonderful things, about how chilly the room was, and how glorious her face, now more than ever, about the rain moaning down the window-panes and about Verlaine's poem. Oh, there are moments sublime with an indefinable joy because at last nature has prevailed, because its energies have broken through the dike of convention, prejudice and fear, rushing like a stream of pellucid waters to freshen the earth; then there follow moments, equally high of heart, when that which prevails is not blind nature alone but that which is specifically human; when two lovers say quietly to each other: let us talk: and are overwhelmed with a desire for each other's souls.

"Do you know something, Paul?" Babette said. "I just thought of something funny. I love Condorcet because your thoughts are so full of him. I'd love your dog, if you had one. But why do you love this dead man?"

"It's not Condorcet I love, Babette. It's an idea."

"But one can't love an idea!" she exclaimed.

"Yes, one can."

"How?"

"Men and women have forgotten how all-embracing love can be. In our modern sense—in the poem by Verlaine which I read to you—love is restricted to the idealization of one passion: a wonderful passion, but only one."

"What other kind of love is there?"

"Love has another meaning, Babette. Men and women have known it, and greater poets than Verlaine have praised it. Their essence is expressed in three lines of Dante's *Vision* where he sees the scattered leaves of all the universe gathered up, bound into one volume by love."

"What does it mean?"

"Among other things, it means love is a force which impels every creature to obey the highest dictates of its true nature."

"The highest dictates of my nature," Babette laughed, "impel me to love you."

"That's not a bad beginning," I said. "Love of me has led you to a love of Condorcet. That may lead you to a love of history, and that, in the end, to a love of man. I read an English poet the other day who said: Glory to man in the highest, for man is the master of things."

"What nonsense, Paul! You know perfectly well that after you leave Paris, I'll never give Condorcet another thought."

"Then you won't remember me at all?"

"Paul! How can I forget you?"

"Can you remember me without remembering Condorcet?"

"Hardly," she said, laughing.

"With me," I said, "it will be the other way around. I shall never be able to think of Condorcet without thinking of you in Paris."

"Cochon!" she said. "I don't think I like the way you put it."

We both laughed. I took her in my arms, and this time it was even more wonderful. When my senses at last returned to earth, they were again so intensified that I perceived Babette with that clarity which is excited in us by a perfect phrase in music or a solid expanse of red in painting. She was tired; I cradled her lovely dark head in my arms and let her sleep awhile. Does the lover in moments of happiness experience the same intensity of vision, the same exaltation of feeling as the saint in the desert or the poet inspired by his muse? And now for the first time the gulf was bridged, and I felt a continuity between my love for Babette and my passion for history where "all things have become but images of themselves, and have lost their urgency and their venom." For now I could see, clearly and in the same flash of sight, as it were: beyond my ego, Babette; beyond Babette, Paris; beyond Paris, Condorcet; beyond Condorcet, the French Revolution; beyond all of these, man

struggling across the long centuries with sublime courage and indestructible hope out of sanguinary darkness toward "a great ring of pure and endless light, all calm as it was bright."

I dozed off. When I awoke, Babette was dressed. The rain had stopped and we went back to the city, where she took her metro. At midnight I went to the café on the Rue Lafayette to meet Hague. I was still walking on air but subsided at once when I saw Hague's face. It was pale and drawn; there were dark circles under his eyes, and he was stone sober. I joined him at his table. Without a word, he slid a cable toward me. It announced his father's death and urged him to return to New York at once.

"He was a great guy," Hague said.

I knew how he felt. He had not been at his father's deathbed. I thought of my mother, and pressed Hague's hand in silence.

"Let's walk," he said.

We went down near the Tuileries and stood on the bridge whose red and green lights threw weird reflections into the Seine. For a long time we did not speak, then Hague said:

"I'm leaving for Cherbourg tomorrow. You'll explain to Boucher, won't you?"

"Of course. I'll help you pack."

"Thanks." Then he added: "It's crazy. I'm twenty-eight and here I am—a millionaire publisher and editor."

"I'm sure you'll be a great success," I said.

"I haven't seen my country for five years," he said. "They say it's changed a lot. My forefathers were farmers and soldiers in the Revolution. Some of them went west. Grandfather farmed in Ohio. Dad came east and started from scratch and left a fortune and a powerful press. That's a man for you, and that's America. Do you think I learned anything bumming around in Europe, Paul? I hope so. I'm going to be a big shot in a big empire. Today my country is a powerful young giant in a world of economic cripples. And it's one of the few spots left where there is anything like democracy. You've got to be good to hold on to your place; there's plenty of competition; and our future will demand many things of an American. You've got to be good, believe me."

"You'll be good," I said.

I walked him home and spent the night at his place, sleeping on the couch in the living room. The next day I helped him pack and saw him off at the station. He was feeling a little better and, as we still had half an hour to the train, ordered some vermouth at the bar. One or two slow sips, and a light came into his eye.

"Say, I can't do this to Boucher. I've got to tell him myself. What's his phone number?"

I gave him the number and Hague disappeared to make the phone call. When he returned, he said:

"Great fellow, Boucher."

The train rolled in. Our parting was swift and warm. Hague said he would write me, and urged me to visit him in New York someday. The porters loaded his baggage into the car, Hague leaped onto the step just as the train started to move, we waved to each other and he was gone. On the way home, I thought that in those monotonous tributes *great guy* and *great fellow* which Hague had given first his deceased father, then his living teacher, there was not only an American attempt to conceal deeply felt emotion, but also signs of Hague's vanishing rebellion against life, and an acceptance of his place in it.

Summer and fall seemed lonely without Hague, despite Babette and despite my work. But he did write—brief, friendly notes full of the subdued excitement which his new life at home was bringing him.

I kept seeing Babette Saturday afternoons: marvelous moments when we sometimes felt absolutely identical and sometimes discovered that, after all, we were two separate persons. At such moments she thought I must be preoccupied with my work and would ask about her "rival." I had little new to report about my thesis until after New Year's. Then, one Saturday afternoon of fresh-falling snow, we made love in my room and immediately afterward, as if awakening from some long, delicious sleep, she opened her eyes and said, her voice coming from some mysterious distance:

"Oh, you have no idea how one feels! You are not body and not mind and not heart; you are an atom which some immense, wonderful force has struck and shattered and melted into the world."

If I had told Babette that this was the language of the mystics, she would have laughed. Yet she herself soon made the transition from the shattered atom to the realm of ideas and asked about my paper. I told her we were nearing the end of the story as such. You remember how Condorcet, his clothes torn, his leg wounded, and hungry as a dog enters a tavern and orders food.

"Let me have an omelette," he says to the innkeeper.

"How many eggs in your omelette, citizen?"

"A dozen."

"What is your trade?"

"I'm a carpenter."

"Carpenters haven't got smooth hands like yours, and they don't ask for a dozen eggs in their omelettes."

The innkeeper sends for the village authorities. They demand

to see Condorcet's papers. In times like these you must not budge without papers. Condorcet has none. They search him and find only a volume of Latin poems by Horace. Then the peasants seize him who dreamed of liberty, equality and fraternity for them; they bind and drag him bleeding toward Bourg-la-Reine. On this *via dolorosa* he faints. A passing peasant takes pity on him and gives him a horse and that is how at last he reaches the town. Here they throw him into the cold damp cell of the prison. When they come to examine him the next morning, they find him on the floor—dead.

Babette's face, watching mine intently as I told the story, now became moist with tears.

"How did he die?" she asked softly.

"That's one of the unsolved puzzles of history, of which there are many," I said. "We do not know whether he died from suffering and exhaustion, from apoplexy or from poison which he administered himself. Does it matter? His life was over."

"And now your theme is done," she said. "When are you going to hand it in?"

"It's not done," I said. "I have still to do the last section, and a very important one it is."

"But since Condorcet is dead, what more is there to tell?" said Babette.

"Do you remember my saying that when he was hiding at Mme. Vernet's house from the guillotine, he wrote an essay defending the ideals of the Revolution? That essay was his spiritual testament. In a way it was also the testament of his age. You can't very well complete Condorcet's story without that testament."

"Tres bien," said Babette. "And when you have done that last section, you are going to tell me about it. Otherwise you know what I'll do to you."

"Murder me," I said and kissed her.

I did not complete my thesis until late in the spring. Then came the exam at the end of the school year. I worked hard, and even skipped a Saturday afternoon with Babette. She understood, saying she wanted me to do my work and would not permit anything to spoil it. When the exam came, it turned out to be a stiff one. There was one question through which I had to bluff my way. It asked us to explain what Napoleon meant when he said: "The Popes, at any rate, are better than such charlatans as Cagliostro or Kant, or any of the other German visionaries." Another question stumped me completely, and I had to omit answering it altogether. It asked us to give the reasons for the great party struggles among the Franks from the death of Clothar the First to the murder of Queen Brunhild. Later I discovered that not a single student in the class could

answer that question properly, so I felt better. I passed my exam. Professor Boucher congratulated me on my Condorcet thesis and suggested that I have it published sometime. Then I began to make preparations for going home. Babette acted in the most extraordinary way; she cheerfully helped me pack, bought me little souvenirs and in general conducted herself as if I were simply going on a brief vacation from which I would soon return to resume our life in Paris. I set my departure for a Saturday evening, so that I could spend my last day in Paris with her. But, out of some strange instinct, she insisted on making a holiday out of the previous Saturday.

"You can never tell what will happen at the last moment," she said.

We decided to spend the afternoon at Fontainebleau. It was a wonderful spring day and through the windows of our room (we had engaged the same one as the first time) we could see the sun gleaming through trees in bloom. We made love and read poetry all afternoon, and Babette had tears in her eyes when I recited to her Beaudelaire's sonnet: When you will sleep, my shadow-dark beauty, beneath a monument fashioned of black marble; and when you will have for your alcove and mansion nothing but a drenched cavern and a hollow grave; when the stone, pressing your timorous breast, and your flanks, supple with a charming indolence, will prevent your heart from beating and desiring, and your feet from running their adventurous ways; then the tomb, the confidant of my unending dream—for the tomb will always understand the poet—during those long nights when sleep is banished, will say to you: "What have you gained, imperfect courtesan, not to have known what the dead are weeping for?" And the worm shall gnaw your skin like a remorse. . . .

It was fortunate we had that last afternoon in Fontainebleau together. Babette's instincts were right: during the week my fellow students decided to give Professor Boucher a farewell party in a large Paris restaurant, and they chose Saturday noon as the occasion—only seven hours before my train would start toward Vienna. I asked Babette to come to this party.

"No," she said. "That would spoil everything. I'll meet you at the railway station at five o'clock. That will give you plenty of time for everything."

The party for Professor Boucher was a gay one, and no one enjoyed it more than the old man. Those long fingers of his, hairy at the knuckles, carried many a glass of wine to his thin lips; his Roman nose sniffed with pleasure the succulent dishes placed before him; and his deep-set black eyes sparkled as he looked around the

room at the students who loved and honored him. After dessert and coffee were served, the toastmaster rose. We had selected a brilliant Chinese student who spoke a flawless French, to be found only in literary masterpieces. He paid a brief, moving tribute to Professor Boucher, then called upon him to say a few words to us. Boucher smiled but did not rise; he addressed us from where he sat.

"Gentlemen," he said in a low, reflective voice, "this is indeed a busman's holiday. I think I have talked to you enough this past year, and from your examination papers I imagine you were not wholly inattentive. (Laughter) I remain seated because I want to speak to you now not as your history professor but as your friend. We are friends, I hope? (Laughter and applause) We French, unlike our Gothic neighbors across the great river, do not pretend to believe that a scholar should spend his entire time in the realm of abstract ideas. I trust you have concerned yourselves in Paris not alone with Clothar the First, and that you have had better success with our ladies than with Queen Brunhild."

There was loud laughter and tumultuous applause, and Professor Boucher himself could not refrain from smiling. Now he hunched his broad shoulders forward, began playing with a piece of white bread and went on:

"I see you have not wasted your time, gentlemen. I hope, however, that in the midst of your adventures you have not neglected the advice which Socrates claimed to have received from Diotima of Mantinea. I haven't the least doubt that all of you remember what that remarkable lady told that no less remarkable philosopher. She said: souls which are pregnant—for there certainly are men who are more creative in their souls than in their bodies—conceive that which is proper for the soul to conceive and contain. And what are these conceptions? Wisdom and virtue in general. And such creators are poets and all artists who are deserving of the name inventor. But, Diotima went on to say, by far the greatest and fairest sort of wisdom is that which is concerned with the ordering of states and families, and which is called temperance and justice."

A great silence filled the room. The students, some seated at the table, some standing behind their chairs to get a better view of Professor Boucher, watched him with reverence. Behind them, the regular clients of the restaurant suspended their eating and listened also, as if the spirit which united us had communicated itself to them; and the waiters, immobile at their posts, turned their pomaded heads in our direction the better to hear the lucid deep voice which now continued:

"The ordering of states and families—temperance and justice,"

Professor Boucher repeated quietly. "Gentlemen, some of you will become professional historians and will have to live the rest of your lives with Clothar and Brunhild. Most of you, however, will become journalists, politicians, businessmen, lawyers, physicians, diplomats, engineers, here or in the countries from which you came and to which you will now return. You will forget Clothar and Brunhild. You will remember very few of the facts you have just written out so brilliantly in your examination papers. Does it matter? It is not the facts themselves which are important. I shall be happy and you will be fortunate if from our studies in history you will carry away the abiding essence behind the ever-changing facts. Blessed are those among you who have really learned from the Greeks the supreme value of human reason; from the Romans, the uses of good law; from the Jews, the importance of morality and justice; and finally from Jesus, the meaning of that sublime saying . . ."

Professor Boucher lowered his head and slowly, almost to himself, yet so clearly that it was heard across the entire room, uttered the words:

"For the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

We were too deeply moved to applaud or comment. After a long silence which was a tribute, we all went up to shake Professor Boucher's hand and to say good-bye.

I looked at my watch. It was five o'clock. Babette was already at the station, waiting for me. I rushed out, hailed a taxi, ordered it to wait in front of my hotel while I had the baggage brought down and picked up my mail. There was only one letter, but this was no time to read it. I hastily put it into my pocket and told the taxi driver to get to the station as fast as possible.

When I finally ran into the waiting room Babette was sitting at a table near the bar neatly dressed in a gray jacket and skirt and white waist.

"I'm late," I said. "Do forgive me, Babette."

"But you are early!" she said, smiling. "I thought that party would last until evening. And you are almost sober! That's wonderful. We still have an hour and a half before your train."

I sat down at the table, facing her, and ordered two vermouthis.

"Our last day," said Babette. She lifted her glass. "Here's to our past together and our futures separately."

We emptied our glasses on that toast and I asked the waiter to refill them. The room was beginning to fill with people waiting for trains. Through the open doors we could hear attendants calling out times and stations.

"You are not French," said Babette.

"Naturally not," I said.

"That is unfortunate. You are going to have a guilty conscience about me."

"Nonsense."

"Oh, it will come to you! But please, Paul—pay no attention to it. You have made me very, very happy, and I shall always remember you with gratitude."

"I shall always remember you with love, Babette."

"I was afraid to say that," she laughed. "After all we are in a railway station."

"Shall I recite you a poem?"

"No, no! That will make me think of things. Just talk to me." Her dark, liquid eyes lit up. "You are a queer devil and we may as well spend our last hour together in a queer way which I shall like. What happened to your paper on my rival?"

"Condorcet? It went off fine. Professor Boucher liked it."

"You are not keeping your bargain, Paul. Where is that last section you promised me?"

"What, here?"

"What else can one do in a railway station?" She leaned over and kissed me on the cheek.

"But you already know the story. Condorcet is dead. That's all there's to it."

"What about his testament?"

"Oh, that."

"Paul, I think you are an intellectual snob. There is always some notion you have which is too good for your inferiors. Me, for instance."

"How can you say that, Babette?"

"There is something you never understood, Paul. We wear clothes to conceal our bodies from strangers. When I fell in love with you, shame, the desire to conceal one's body, vanished, and I stood naked before you. But the mind also has its clothes; it conceals itself from strangers in a thousand ways. Love reveals it to us. I am as happy to see your ideas as I am to see your body; they are both part of you; I love them both.

"Very well," I said. "I'll tell you about the testament and it will always haunt me that I told it to you in our last hour together, waiting for a train that will take me away from you forever."

"I'll take that on my conscience," she said, laughing.

I ordered two more vermouths and told her what there was left of my thesis.

"You remember," I said, "that before his death while hiding in Mme. Vernet's house to escape the guillotine, Condorcet wrote an essay called *A Historical Tableau of the Progress of the Human Spirit*."

"That I remember," said Babette. "His testament."

"The essay begins with the assumption that the evils of life had arisen from a conspiracy of priests and rulers against their fellow men. They had created bad laws and bad institutions. But mankind will finally conquer its enemies. It will liberate itself from evil. Man is capable of perfection. There has been continuous progress in the past; there is bound to be continuous progress in the future."

"Do you believe all that, Paul?" said Babette.

"I am telling you what Condorcet believed," I said.

"What an extraordinary optimist," she said. "I hope he made some attempt to prove his contentions."

"He did. Look at man, he said in effect, and consider the glorious saga of his advance. He starts in the lowest stages of barbarism; he is scarcely better than the beasts of the field and the birds of the air; yet see how across the centuries he advances along the path of enlightenment, virtue and happiness."

"A pretty picture," said Babette.

"It is," I said. "Now Condorcet sets out to analyze man's progress to date. He divides history into ten great epochs, but if I tell you about all of those, I'll never make my train. It must be due now."

"Look at that clock on the wall," said Babette. "You can see for yourself you have another half hour. And believe me, no student of yours will ever listen to you with as much attention—or affection—as I am giving you now. All right: if you must skip most of those ten epochs, at least get down as near to modern times as you can."

"Thank heaven for small favors," I said. "Very well, then: Condorcet's Ninth Epoch of man's history begins with the great intellectual revolution of which he was a part, and ends with the great moral and political revolution which he helped to advance and in which he believed to the day of his death on the floor of that cold, damp cell in Bourg-la-Reine."

"Now you confuse me," said Babette. "If the Ninth Epoch goes up to his death, what is the tenth?"

"The Tenth Epoch," I said, "is the future. For though Condorcet is a fugitive from the guillotine and has no future of his own, he believes to the end in the future of mankind. He insists that the general laws of progress which have governed man's past will continue to govern his future."

"A prophet, eh?" said Babette, smiling, and motioned to the waiter to refill our glasses.

"In a way, yes," I said, "if you want to look into the future far enough and care to believe in it."

"I'm extremely nearsighted," said Babette. "And what did my illustrious rival see in the future?"

"He saw the abolition of inequality between nations; then, the abolition of inequality between classes; and finally, the improvement of individuals, the perfection of human nature itself—physically, intellectually and morally."

"But, Paul, you are surely not going to tell me that everybody can be absolutely equal? What nonsense!"

"I'm only telling you what Condorcet believed," I said. "Besides, he did not say that absolute equality is possible. He believed in equality of freedom and rights. This, he thought, would give the fullest scope for the development of each individual's and each nation's natural capacities. All nations and all men, he claimed, tend toward equality because they all tend toward freedom."

I stopped and lit a cigarette. Babette refused one.

"Is that all there is to your story?"

"That's all there is."

"Talk some more anyway," she said.

"About what?"

"Anything at all."

I looked at her face, now slightly pale, and her large eyes now full of shadows, and for the first time realized why she had made me babble on that way about Condorcet's notions of human progress. A railway attendant came through the door and called out my train. I hailed a porter who took my baggage. My arm was around Babette's waist as we walked through the door toward my car, and there was a lump in my throat. We halted at the step and suddenly, before I could say anything, Babette put her head on my shoulder and began to weep softly. For a few moments she could not speak, then she said:

"Good-bye, Paul. Think of me sometime."

I took her in my arms and kissed her.

"I'll never forget you as long as I live," I said.

The train started to move. I leaped on the step and saluted Babette, trying to smile. She waved to me until she was out of sight.

There was only one other passenger in my compartment, an elderly man with a jaundiced skin who had the porter make up his bed at once and promptly went to sleep. I sat for a long time looking out the train window, watching the night fly past and thinking of Babette. Then I went out into the corridor and stood at one of the windows; there were stars in the sky and I thought of those Saturday evenings when I used to escort Babette to the metro. It was getting late. I went back to my compartment and started to undress. Here was the letter I had received that morning. I opened the envelope sleepily.

The letter was from Father. He was glad the semester was over and that he would soon see me again in Vienna. Did I get much out

of my courses? He hoped the exam went off well and that Professor Boucher liked my thesis, but I need not take those eighteenth century philosophers too seriously. These were different times we were living through. On the other hand, there was much that a sensible man could learn from the French Revolution. As for himself, he was still grieving over the death of Lenin, which had occurred in the first month of that year; but the great fight would go on and victory was inevitable, perhaps within this very decade. All his love to me, and he hoped I had not neglected my health

I undressed, crept into bed, and turned out the light. The train rumbled through the night, and once in a while its hollow whistle screamed in darkness. Sweet Babette. My mother's voice, singing a song from Heine: Paris, farewell, beloved town, Today shall see us parted, I leave you in your overflow Of all that's joyous-hearted. All my senses began to relax. Vienna . . . home . . . what? I felt myself slipping into the depths of slumber and in my ears the wheels of the train roared with an insistent rhythm that seemed to beat out repeatedly the immortal phrase I had heard that afternoon: *the spirit giveth life*. Now through the dark, swift-flowing night came two quick blasts of the train whistle, and in the ensuing silence of a split second I fell asleep and dreamed I was standing in the Place de la Concorde surrounded by an endless crowd of people. Upon a circular wooden platform in the center of the square sat Professor Boucher, broad-shouldered and black-eyed, playing on a harpsichord César Franck's *Prelude, Chorale and Fugue*. The searching music was accompanied on the flute by a slim, good-looking gentleman in powdered wig, satin knee breeches and blue silk stockings whom I recognized at once in the dream as Condorcet. On the edge of this platform, leaning forward almost like a marionette and smiling over the heads of the crowd directly at me, stood Babette, her hands twisted at the wrists in an overdellate stiff pose, like an actress ironically imitating a rival; and from her lovely, parted lips, profoundly crimson like a rain-soaked rose, there issued a strange song which in the dream seemed to me absolutely mad:

*Truth is better than falsehood,
Love is better than hate:
Good is better than evil,
Life is better than death.*

When I awoke, it was broad daylight. In the golden sunlight, there, curving ahead along the green summer earth, lay the invisible, unknown outlines of my coming life in Vienna.

BOOK TWO

*But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh,
and he will curse thee to thy face.*

—The Book of Job

1

*My business in this state
Made me a looker-on here in Vienna.
—Measure for Measure*

RELAXED UPON THIS couch, doctor, I look around your office and through the window. At this moment I am conscious only that the day is dying across the New York sky and the air is gray with the shadows of dusk. But through the whirl of the day's business and the stillness of the night there now comes to all men, wherever they may be upon the globe, the persistent awareness of the great conflict which is to decide the future of humanity. Even a man like myself, detached by illness from the rhythm of the world, must sense the echoes of the guns that roar on every sea, in every sky and across the hills and valleys of the whole round earth. This awareness increases tenfold the agony of loneliness; for I am not only an exile from a country which has ceased to exist and a continent whose light has gone out, but an exile from mankind. I know that others have suffered far more than I and have met the shipwreck of their lives with sublime courage; they have struggled to their feet and set their faces resolutely toward that future which America generously offers them. I want to follow their example, but for that I must be resurrected from the death I have endured. I speak to you from the other side of the tomb which can be destroyed and transcended only by speaking the truth. My erring memory must retrace the course of events that led to the vision, and I must recall the dreams which preceded it, opening their weird images deep in the fog of multitudes honeycombing history, below the dance of the dimensions in mirrored sleep.

Ten years passed from the day I returned to Vienna to the day when my father's home in Floridsdorf was shattered by artillery fire trained upon the working people; and the surface of those years teemed with events so trivial and so pleasant that they obscured for me and those like me the steady approach of disaster. Yet it cannot be said the catastrophe came without warning. It was only my own *Schwaermerei*, the opiate indulgence in the comfort of disembodied ideas, which distorted the real perspective of that decade. I confess

that if I had paid attention to what I saw with my own eyes and heard with my own ears, I would have been better prepared for those things which appeared so incredible when their brutal impact startled us from dogmatic slumber. Indeed, fate knocked on my door the very first day of my return to Vienna, but I did not hear it and never opened the door.

Straight from the railway station I went to see my father. He had moved the offices of *The Future* to the top floor of an apartment house in the Eighth District, on the corner where the Laudongasse crosses the Daungasse. A hatless, coatless, tieless elevator man dropped me off on the sixth floor in a long corridor with a series of casement windows and doors on either side. Father greeted me affectionately in his office, a spacious airy room whose window let in the golden summer light. He looked much as I had left him the previous year. The handsome face was still gaunt, his white hair lay long and heavy on his powerful head, and there was still that tense, concentrated gleam in his blue eyes. But the indefinable light of youth was gone; there was more determination in them and less immediate hope; they were the eyes of a man who fights all the more grimly for an inevitable goal because circumstances have compelled him to postpone it to an unexpected distance in time.

Father explained that his magazine now had a large circulation and required more space. Several of the rooms along the top-floor hallway, however, had been furnished as living quarters for comrades who came and went as their assignments required, and Father suggested I take one. It would cut down my rent to a nominal fee, and I would be within easy distance of the university where I wanted to teach. I liked the prospect of living in the little realm over which my father presided, and agreed to take a corner room at the far end of the long corridor. It was neatly furnished, the casements gave plenty of light and there was a large desk on which I could conveniently work.

We went back to Father's office, and I watched him clear his correspondence, reading it with systematic, careful haste and signing it swiftly. His secretary came in, a small, pale, freckled girl with a thin waist, heavy eyeglasses and unsmiling lips. She placed more letters on Father's desk and hurried out. As always, the desk was piled high with manuscripts and publications, and the walls were lined with books. Now, however, there were photographs around the walls which I had never seen before. Some of them were affectionately inscribed to Father; and as I studied names unknown to me—Hans Bayer, Rudolf Immerman, Janos Vekely—he explained they were contributors to *The Future*.

"There's one of them now," said Father as the door opened and

a tall, well-dressed man came in with a snappy wave of the hand and a curt Servus! I recognized Immerman from his photo, and when Father introduced us I noticed his hands were white, long and carefully manicured. Immerman sat down near the desk opposite my father, lit a cigarette and flung one long, thin leg around the knee of the other.

"Janos and I are ready to start for Berlin this afternoon," he said. His face was curiously shaped; the bulging forehead was broad and the hair blond and thick; then the face narrowed down steadily along the sallow cheeks.

"Where is Janos?" my father asked.

"He's packing the last of his endless suitcases," said Immerman, "and ought to be here any moment now."

Under his fleshy nose and sensual mouth the carefully combed mustache drooped down softly at the edges; but most remarkable were the green eyes which searched my face as if looking for something. Then, with an engaging smile, Immerman offered me a cigarette and courteously lit it for me.

The door opened again, and the man who came in said cheerfully to my father:

"Well, Schuman, we're all set. I hate to leave Vienna at a time like this, but when Hans Bayer issues instructions the devil himself couldn't make him change his mind. He's getting to be something of a bureaucrat."

"Sit down, Janos," said my father. "This is my son Paul, and this is Janos Vekely."

Janos Vekely's face was clean-shaven, clean-cut; his whole being had a warm, natural courtesy which at once put me at ease. He pulled up a chair to Father's desk and said:

"Why do you suppose Hans wants us back in Berlin?"

"No doubt he thinks the situation there requires it," said my father.

"Things are pretty lively there," said Janos Vekely, "even after last year's terrible failure. The Feme murders are nothing to sneeze at. But what about Vienna? It's an important spot, too."

"They'll manage without us here," Immerman said.

Janos Vekely colored slightly, straightened his broad shoulders and sat back in erect dignity.

"There's a civil war brewing here," my father said thoughtfully. "Our strength lies in this city which is socialist, anticlerical and rich. The strength of the enemy lies in the countryside, which is poor, backward, conservative and Catholic."

"The way Chancellor Seipel is behaving," Janos Vekely said, "there ought to be a showdown between the opposing camps."

"Seipel has declared war on the socialists," said Father. "That

dangerously smooth cleric has organized a coalition of all the non-socialist parties in Parliament. He's trying to isolate the socialists, so we've got to support them."

"Naturally," said Janos Vekely. "Seipel's whole life seems to be devoted to a single aim. He wants to unite all the reactionaries into a powerful bloc to crush the socialist idea."

"What sort of people does this bloc contain?" I asked, and thought to myself: what a queer homecoming!

"The Pan-Germans," said Immerman, "the reactionary Agrarian League, the political Catholics. Seipel has united them all into one bourgeois bloc."

"How can these people work together?" I said. "Don't they disagree on many things?"

"Not on fundamentals," said Janos Vekely. "They all agree on smashing the labor organizations and annihilating the socialist movement. I'd like to stay in Vienna to fight this dirty crusade."

"You'll fight exactly the same fight in Berlin," my father said.

"Or any other place the world over," said Immerman.

"Except the U.S.S.R.," Janos Vekely corrected him.

"For my part," said Immerman quickly. "I'd rather go to Berlin. Our workers are more militant than the Viennese."

"Are they?" said my father, looking rather peeved.

"The Viennese," said Immerman, grinning, "treat the revolution as if it were a dance, a masquerade ball or a Heurigen. Why doesn't the party here put up posters around the city saying: the revolution will take place Friday evening, ob schoen, ob Regen?"

The three men laughed, and as soon as the joke dawned on me I laughed also. Ob schoen, ob Regen, rain or shine. If it rains, the revolution will take place inside the ballroom.

"If we must go to Berlin," said Janos Vekely, "let's go at once before we miss the train."

He rose and Immerman followed suit. As they shook hands with my father, he said:

"Give my best to Hans Bayer. And be sure to send me articles and photos—all you can—even if I do print only ten per cent of what you send me."

They all laughed at that, and the two men closed the door behind them.

"That's how it is," said my father a little sadly. "They come and go. Sometimes I feel like taking a trip myself, and seeing the struggle in other countries. But my duty is here."

His gaunt face was grave with hopes held in check and boundless curiosity subordinated to what must be done.

"Who is Immerman?" I asked.

"One of our cleverest workers," said Father. "I think he came from Berlin originally, though he says so little about himself, I can only guess. He is universally respected and trusted. He does a remarkable job circulating among the upper classes, and he writes good articles for me. The style is rather dry, but the information is always reliable. I don't know what my paper would do without him, and Hans Bayer seems to think him indispensable in the practical work."

"And who is Hans Bayer?" I said.

"Oh, Hans Bayer! Now there's a remarkable fellow for you. He's the head of an important unit in Berlin, but he gets around the world, too. He was here for a few weeks this spring. A pity you missed him. But no doubt he'll show up again one of these days."

"I like Janos Vekely," I said.

"That's not hard," said Father, smiling. "Everybody likes him. You know who he is, don't you?"

"The name sounds vaguely familiar."

"He was an important figure in the people's republic of Hungary right after the war. He's a fine worker, but unfortunately he can't forget the days of his brief glory. He's still haunted by the tumult and the triumph of that high moment, and by the memory of himself addressing great crowds who applauded his thoughts and obeyed his commands. He can't forget these things, and that's too bad."

"Anybody would feel bad sliding down from the peaks of fame into the anonymous abyss," I said.

"Yes, it's natural," said Father, "if your nervous system suffers from hangovers of the old way of life. Our people must not be individualists or egoists. It's a crime to let that kind of antiquated feeling affect your judgment or your relation with your fellow workers. You just heard him say that Hans Bayer is something of a bureaucrat!"

"Isn't it true?"

"Not at all! That was only the wounded vanity of Janos Vekely talking. In saner moments, Janos knows better than that. And now—how about some lunch, Paul?"

We went into the corridor and rang for the elevator. The door opened at once, and a short stocky man with a black mustache came out. Excitedly he shoved his bowler hat to the back of his head, seized my father's coat sleeve and shouted:

"Lucky I caught you, Schuman! You can't leave! It's terribly important!"

"Take it easy, Hoffman," my father said quietly. "Join us for lunch. You can talk to me there."

The elevator door was open, and the operator leaned patiently against the side of the car listening.

"There's no time" Hoffman insisted. His short, heavy body trembled with excitement. "Wait till I tell you what happened!"

"Going down?" said the elevator man.

"Look, Hoffman," my father said kindly. "There's a time and place for everything. I haven't seen my son here for a year. Don't be stubborn. Come along with us."

Father stepped into the elevator and I followed.

"Down," my father said to the operator.

"All right!" Hoffman shouted. "So you don't want to hear how they shot Seipel!"

The elevator man was about to close the door of the car, but my father stopped him with a sharp, "Wait, Otto!" We stepped back into the corridor again, and Father took Hoffman by both coat-lapels and looked intently into his brown eyes.

"What was that?" Father said severely.

"Someone just shot Seipel at the southern railway station," Hoffman said calmly.

"What are you talking about?" Father snapped. "Dr. Ignaz Seipel?"

"The chancellor, naturally."

"Come into my office," Father said.

We sat around his desk again. Hoffman put his hat down on a chair and wiped the sweat from his brow with a large blue handkerchief. Father started to take notes on a sheet of yellow paper.

"Now tell me exactly what happened," he said.

"It was at the southern railway station in Vienna," said Hoffman. "The chancellor was either waiting for a train or coming out of a train, I don't know which. At that moment an unemployed worker steps up and fires a revolver at him."

"An unemployed worker?" said Father, frowning.

"Yes, they got his name when they arrested him. Karl Jaworeck."

"Is the chancellor dead?"

"No; the doctors say he will recover quickly."

"Then they won't hang Jaworeck," said my father, "but they will make a political martyr of Seipel, and that's unfortunate. Who is Jaworeck? One of yours?"

"Certainly not!" Hoffman said with indignation. His heavy black hair hung thickly over one side of his forehead, and now he pushed it back with a jerk of a heavy hand. "As a matter of fact, I thought he was one of yours."

"Nonsense," said Father grimly. "You know we are absolutely against things like that on principle."

"So are we," Hoffman said.

"An unemployed worker, then," said Father. "Unaffiliated with any party." He jotted down some notes, then looked up and said: "Excuse me. This is my son Paul. And this is one of those Social Democratic trade-union bureaucrats, Teddy Hoffman." Father smiled gently and added: "The united front from below."

"I knew a Teddy Hoffman once," I said. "He went to school with me, and later we fought together at the front."

"Teddy used to tell me about you," said Hoffman. "He was a good boy."

"One of the best," I said.

How strange it was to meet Teddy's father for the first time under these circumstances; yet it is just so that people often meet, crossing each other's paths in the most unexpected places, at the most unexpected times.

"I must write an editorial at once," Father said. "And we'll have to agree on a joint leaflet."

"Let's start now," said Hoffman.

"Of course," Father said. "There's not a minute to waste. We've got to make it clear we do not approve Karl Jaworeck's futile deed. We must also place the blame squarely where it belongs. The despots oppress the worker day in and day out; they starve him, jail him and beat him; they force him into a sanguinary war which murders ten million men and maims another ten million; they send him back, crippled or exhausted, to a shabby breadless home and give him no work; they let his children go without milk and his wife without clothes; they rob him of his political rights, persecute his unions and when he comes out to beg for a job, they shoot him down in the streets; they drown his republics in blood, drive him into exile and hunt him relentlessly like an animal; then they wonder that some poor slob goes off his head and fires a revolver at an arch-reactionary politician in the fantastic delusion that somehow it will mend matters!"

"That will do," said Hoffman, "but write it with a little more reserve, please."

I left the two men at their work, and as I closed the door behind me heard Hoffman calling after me:

"Freundschaft und Freiheit!"

It was the hail and farewell of the Viennese socialists: Friendship and Freedom!

I went down, located the nearest café and ordered lunch. It was good to see the Vienna crowd again, to hear the Strauss waltzes and even the tremulous massacre of dated American jazz by a violin, a piano and a flute. I thought of Father, Rudolf Immerman,

Janos Vekely and Teddy Hoffman and my heart warmed toward them. They were impelled by a profound passion for what they believed to be the cause of universal justice; the earth was their country, mankind their religion. Yet on that very account they were also concerned with an isolated episode, the mad act of a poor man driven by suffering to desperation; and even the smallest episode confirmed their implacable antagonism to the great, sane, comfortable realm of money and power which kept a continent in poverty and turmoil, and, secure at its political gaming tables, could order the slaughter of the peoples for grandiloquent stakes which somehow never materialized. That much I could understand. My whole generation was to some extent disillusioned. Even Hague had written me from his offices in New York:

"Don't blame the prevailing cynicism on the war. Blame it on the so-called peace. The trouble is not with the hope but with the hope *betrayed*."

Father was fortunate. He had answers for nearly everything, and upon these answers he staked his life. I would forever be starting from the beginning and would consider myself lucky if, after years of study and labor and teaching, I could ask at least one fruitful question. The talk I had heard this day in the offices of *The Future* was already beginning to dissolve from my mind and was destined to vanish for years beyond the horizon of forgotten things. I could share neither the fears nor the hopes it expressed. When I needed certitude amidst the storms that continued to lash the world, I turned to history. For me it became increasingly a lighthouse on the furious seas of contemporary disaster, a beacon to reassure man that gales have been weathered; that with knowledge and fortitude the most battered ships have at last reached port. It was from the lighthouse of the past that I intended to watch the violent present in secure detachment.

The following weeks were a time of leisurely melting into the familiar life of the city. I enjoyed walking through the streets, mingling with the crowd and feeling upon my face the mild seductive wind that blows from the Austrian Alps, the nerve-caressing Foehn. And I looked up old friends: my old teacher at the university, Professor Aaron Gross; his son Siegfried; Uncle Peter; and, soon, on an entirely new plane, I even resumed my friendship with Helga. And in these relations of everyday existence, simple, natural, pleasant, I heard casual remarks which made no special impression on me at the time; and which only later, in that retrospect where we understand what we can no longer undo, assumed the character of omens, as trivial in appearance and as full of doom as the gizzard of a bird upon the altars of the ancient world.

2

*History hath triumphed over time, which
besides it nothing but eternity hath tri-
umphed over.*

—Sir Walter Raleigh.

PROFESSOR AARON GROSS lived in the Ninth District near the Danube Canal. Despite his fame at home and abroad, he insisted on living in the Jewish quarter. That was due to modesty and a compelling desire not to be separated from his own by that enormous distance which can stretch across three city squares.

When I rang the bell, he opened the door himself, and through his old-fashioned spectacles his eyes smiled a warm welcome as he shook both my hands and urged me to come in. I followed him down the hallway lined with books into his study, and here he plied me with all kinds of questions about Professor Boucher, the Sorbonne, Paris; and about my father. His strong, kindly face, with its lines of thought and suffering and its gray mustache and beard, was wrinkled in smiles. He lit a long, black cigar and through clouds of comfortable, aromatic smoke asked questions and listened to answers. Around the study were many books and a few portraits of relatives, friends and public figures. I recognized that of Baruch Spinoza of Amsterdam, and that of Theodor Herzl of Vienna, affectionately autographed to my host.

"Are you nervous at the idea of facing a class?" Professor Gross asked.

"I'm scared to death."

"Everyone is the first time. But one gets over it. It is easier if you remember that the students are boys and girls who feel the way you did four years ago." He puffed at his long black cigar and added smiling: "That's the difficulty, to remember how one felt four years ago."

"How is Siegfried?" I asked.

"Fine, very fine indeed," Professor Gross said. "He's an intern at the hospital now, but he's preparing to set up an office of his own."

Voices floated in from the corridor.

"That must be Siegfried now," Professor Gross said quietly. He waited in silence for a few moments, as if he expected his son to enter, but the door remained closed and the voices we had heard died away into distance.

"Excuse me for talking to you about this," Professor Gross said, "but you are his friend, you will understand. My heart aches for the poor boy. He is pursuing false gods who themselves do not know where they are going. He wants to be independent and does not know that independence is a state of mind and heart. He resents the race and neighborhood into which he was born, and wants to leave the one and deny the other; and his profession is already becoming for him a mere instrument for a kind of social success for which a real scientist would blush."

He said this without bitterness or reproach in a tone of undefined anxiety. He threw away his half-smoked cigar with a nervous gesture and lit a fresh one.

"Do forgive me for saying these things," he went on. "But have you observed that prejudice is increasing these days?"

"It's a vile thing," I said, "and nothing new."

"Yes—old, old! As old as the empires of the Persians, Hellenes and Romans. But wouldn't you think that in these days of progress, science and democracy that frightful illness of the body social would disappear? Yes, old indeed . . . old enough to die. . . . For thirteen centuries the church-empire made citizenship identical with orthodoxy. We were excluded from the state, but permitted to exist as intermediaries. They had to tolerate us as living proof that the dominant creed was true, and they thought they had to persecute us to show the dire consequences of rejecting that creed. Even after the Reformation broke up the church-empire into separate church-states, and these granted civil equality to dissenters, we continued to suffer. As the alleged villains of the great religious drama, we remained the untouchables of the West. Only with the arrival of the democratic revolution did we get our first taste of toleration in two thousand years. The new state ideal was based on the welfare of the whole people, regardless of creed; and so the Netherlands gave us refuge and Cromwell opened to us the gates of the English commonwealth. And finally, when the democratic revolution reached its apex in eighteenth century America and France, there was laid down that principle of complete religious liberty which at last destroyed the ghetto in the West. What wonderful vistas of freedom there stretched before the whole world then—for us as for all men! Is it any wonder that so many of our sons and daughters believe so passionately in the gospel of democracy which teaches equality of opportunity and freedom of conscience? And yet, prejudice is very

old—and it refuses to die. In the very heart of the liberal nineteenth century the ancient hostility was revived.”

His voice seemed remote now, almost as if he were thinking aloud; yet I knew that his words were animated by the belief that I would understand him, if only a little.

“I’ve watched this thing from the other side of the fence,” I said, “and what puzzles me most is the base ingratitude of my fellow Europeans. In view of the contributions you have made to our civilization, aren’t your detractors returning evil for good? I don’t mean only the great philosophers and physicians and merchants and scholars and poets you have given us. I mean something as deep as the influence of the Scriptures themselves. For two thousand years you have been the martyrs and witnesses of the ideal element in man, the living proof that he lives not by bread alone.”

“Prejudice today is not simply ingratitude,” said Professor Gross. “It is a political device deliberately employed by sections of the European elite to mobilize the illiterate against the democratic idea. Above all it is the instrument of those who want to revive in one form or another the church-empire of the Middle Ages. Bismarck cynically fostered prejudice in Germany in his war against liberalism. He knew that prejudice is a germ which can thoroughly poison a people and render it immune to democratic thought. In our own country it has been used the same way. At first our young republic seemed to open all doors to the gifted of every race and creed, and that is what my son is counting on. But already the reaction has set in. Those who wish to restore everything that is old and rotten have not forgotten that we can be a convenient scape-goat.”

It was obvious that Professor Gross said this knowing it was probably too late to alter the course of his son’s development; he spoke apparently to lighten the burden of his heart which was heavy less for himself than for the possible dangers which might overwhelm Siegfried. Now he hastened to explain:

“Certainly I don’t want anyone to be immured once more behind the walls of a ghetto. But in the great world around us there are groups where Siegfried would be more at home, and closer to that which is best in our times. Why does he insist on attaching himself to champions of a past which, once revived, is bound to crush him?”

There were voices in the corridor again, and this time Professor Gross opened the door and I saw Siegfried talking to a small, gray-haired woman. My host called them both in. Siegfried greeted me warmly and introduced me to his mother. Mrs. Gross, with great charm, urged me to visit them and excused herself to attend household duties. Siegfried said he would help her with some chores and

would be back in a few minutes. When they left, Professor Gross rubbed his beard reflectively and returned to his subject as if it were something he wanted to abandon but could not.

"Yes," he mused almost to himself, "the poor boy is chasing a mirage. He wants to be accepted in circles which despise his origins, but which he imagines will make an exception of him. The danger is they might, for he is very popular and everybody seems to like him. But in that case he will be the shadow of other peoples' shadows—neither fish, flesh nor fowl; a hybrid without roots and without future."

He stopped in some embarrassment as we heard footsteps. The door opened and Siegfried returned. He had grown a little heavier; his liquid black eyes had restless depths in them; his hair was neatly parted; he was well dressed. The conversation became deliberately casual, as if father and son dared not touch on the source of their disagreement; yet it was clear that Siegfried loved the father whom he felt it necessary to abandon. Finally Professor Gross excused himself, saying he had some work to do, and Siegfried invited me to his study.

"If you have any trouble with your teaching in the fall," Professor Gross said kindly as I was leaving, "come to me. Any time at all. I'll be only too glad to help."

The walls of Siegfried's study at the other end of the corridor were covered with colored reproductions of Bruegel, Cézanne and Picasso. The moment we entered, he relaxed, lit a cigarette for me and took one himself. His face became animated and gay and he began to talk with great enthusiasm of his plans to go into practice for himself—on the Ringstrasse, no less.

"It's a nice idea," I said, "but where will you get the money to practice in Vienna's most fashionable district?"

"I have backers," he said with quiet confidence. "Ten or twelve rich patients can guarantee any doctor's success."

"Where did you find them?"

"Through the Countess zu Fassenheim."

I did not know whether he referred to Helga in this formal way because he knew the truth about us, or whether it was the dry irony now fashionable among the postwar generation.

"How is Helga?" I asked.

"Very unhappy," said Siegfried. "The old count neglects her shamefully. He's away most of the time, either abroad on diplomatic missions or at Carlsbad curing himself of senile ailments."

Despite his irony, Siegfried was unable wholly to conceal the deep feeling which the thought of Helga had inspired in him from that very first night long ago when he had met her under her father's roof. I wanted to change the subject.

"Before your rich patients will support you," I said, "you'll need a place in which to treat them. Where will you get the money?"

"One of Helga's admirers is lending me some."

"Who is this generous patron?"

"Friedrich Ritter. Surely you've heard of him, no? He's quite a character. From the standpoint of the Almanach de Gotha it's something of a social comedown for Helga. She's an aristocrat, he's a bourgeois. But he's richer than Croesus: a Rhine industrialist with big interests in our country. Owns a raft of stock in the Austrian steel cartel, the Alpine Montangesellschaft. Not to mention banks in Berlin, Vienna and Prague."

"Helga's a lucky girl," I said.

"Not luck, but will," he said. "She has the energy of Maria Theresa, the majesty of Queen Elizabeth and the concupiscence of the Empress Catherine."

"What a way to talk about her."

"It's true. She will kill every man she touches, but men will always love her in spite of everything."

"Do you see her often?"

"As often as she'll let me, which is never enough, and alas never alone. Anyway, she lets me come to her parties. Which reminds me: she's having one Saturday night. Why don't you come?"

"Nobody has invited me," I said. "Besides I want some time to settle down before I get caught in the social whirl."

"Helga will be terribly pleased to see you. Why don't you phone her? She often asks about you."

"Give her my best. Tell her I'll look her up one of these days."

"You won't come Saturday night?"

"No."

When I left, Siegfried accompanied me to the street door. At the last moment he took a pencil and an old envelope from his pocket and hastily scribbled something.

"In case you change your mind about Saturday night," he said, "here's Helga's address and phone number."

"I won't change my mind," I said, putting the note in my pocket.

On the way home I thought about Helga. It was easy to memorize dates and battles behind the walls of erudition, and hard to face your own feelings. Paris had wiped out all resentment against her. I would never love her again, so there was really nothing to be angry about. If I ever become friends with Helga, she ought to thank Babette, whom I would never see again and never forget.

Back in my room on the Daungasse I found a letter from Hague in New York. He was busy with big things and crazy about his country. He lived where he wanted to live and did what he wanted

to do. He was free. Siegfried was at the other end of the line, and he wanted to be free. Why not? We were all young and we were all going to be free.

It was a warm night and I could not sleep. I tossed about in the dark and closed my eyes and lay still, but it was no use. Was I afraid to return to my own city? The old lyrical feeling was vanishing fast. I turned on the light and tried to read. This philosopher of history was very fashionable in Europe. He announced the decline of the West, wrote very well, and his rhythmic metaphors at last lulled me into reverie. Was mine, perhaps, also an "Egyptian" soul with a passion toward the infinite? True, the present did appear to me only as a narrow common frontier between two immeasurable stretches, but it remained to be seen whether I had any real perception of past and future, or whether that was merely another form of self-deception. The metaphor was nearer home. See Petrarch. To live in your time, yet essentially not to be of it: to be historically sensitive about your country, Europe, the world: to collect documents, records, objects, indices of progress and tributes to Time. The enigma of Time—queer, tempting, insoluble. . . .

Saturday afternoon, Uncle Peter telephoned and asked me to visit him at his office in the Library. I had seen him briefly once since my return, but this time we had a chance to talk at some length. My uncle had changed a great deal in appearance. His mustache was gone, and for the first time in my life I saw his amiable bachelor's mouth now parted in a warm smile. His white hair had grown quite thin and was spotted yellow.

Almost immediately after the preliminary greetings, my uncle began to describe with great enthusiasm an experience he had had the previous summer. He had gone with a party of Austrian pilgrims to Italy. In Florence he had been profoundly moved by the great Madonna of Cimabue which ended the hieratic tradition of Byzantium, where the Virgin is the remote ruler of a theocratic realm, the Mother of God and the Queen of Heaven, and invoked for the first time the more tender and human Mother of the Child. And facing her in the same gallery he saw that other great Madonna, Giotto's embodiment in plastics of the ideals of St. Francis, the new humanism with its love of life and man, its facing away from heaven toward the earth, from judgment to compassion. But I think what impressed my uncle most in Florence was the cycle of frescoes in the Spanish chapel of the Santa Maria de Novello, whose blue and gray colors dimly lit the majestic composition of The Fighting and Triumphant Church painted by Giotto's disciples. He described to me in great detail the vision of Christ and the prophets enthroned

gloriously upon the heights, illuminating the darkness of heretical dogma and dispelling the shadows cast by their errors. Other panels celebrated the ideals, labors and triumphs of the watchdogs of the Lord, the Dominican friars; and my uncle was especially pleased with the painting which showed the hounds lying at the foot of the papal throne, awaiting the call to spring upon the wolves of heresy; and in the panel near by the figure of St. Thomas Aquinas seated on his Gothic throne below which cower the defeated heretics Arius, Averroes and Sabellius.

From Florence, the pilgrims went on to Fiesole and Siena, and thence to Rome; and at last my uncle experienced the happiness of mingling in the Square of St. Peter with the thousands of pilgrims from every part of the earth to celebrate the exalted meaning of Whitsuntide. After the dim simplicity of St. Stephen's cathedral in Vienna, St. Peter's was immensely impressive; for here a truly imperial architecture glorified those ideals which had first been announced without temples, altars or images. After mass on Whitsmonday in San Pietro in Vincoli, my uncle had gone with his fellow pilgrims to the catacombs of San Stefano, and stood in reverence before the underground tombs of the early Christians who by their hope, faith, love and suffering had with sublime fortitude preserved the faith which was to fill the entire being of the West for centuries.

At last came the greatest moment of all. The pilgrims stood in the vast Hall of the Consistories with its canopied throne, and Uncle Peter listened to the noontide bells of Rome ringing out the faith and glory of the church to the eternal skies and across the endless world *per saecula saeculorum*. The pilgrims knelt with beating hearts and the door opened and the aged beloved Pope entered, the servant of the servants of God, dressed all in white, followed by his retinue in red and purple and black, and with profound love and firmness of purpose he spoke to his children of the troubles of the time, and urged upon them the sole remedy for all evils, the unassailable unity of the great Catholic family. Then he held out the Fisherman's Ring, and the pilgrims kissed it and Uncle Peter closed his eyes and bowed his head in joyous, humble, reverent exaltation as he heard the voice of the Holy Father saying: I bestow my blessing not only upon you but also upon all those who are dear to you, and my uncle silently prayed that the blessing would be extended to a lost sheep like myself.

My uncle told me this story with deep feeling, and there was in his eyes and voice and his entire being all the fervent faith I had seen in him when I was a boy.

But now, out of a clear sky, his narrative left the realm of spirit and descended into the dark conflicts of the world and a new Uncle

Peter emerged. After the pilgrimage, my uncle said, he remained in Italy for a few weeks to pay his respects not to the paintings, cathedrals and catacombs of his faith, but to the temporal power which now held the land in its iron grip. He became fervent in his tribute to the renegade socialist who had risen to supreme power in the name of sacred selfishness by means of force and fraud. Though the new condottieri had been in power only a year at the time of my uncle's visit, he was certain they would save both the state and the church from the "socialist rabble"; and it was this prospect which filled him with such boundless hope and enthusiasm for the future of Europe.

The murder of Matteotti led us to a general discussion about the power of the status quo to punish heresy. Soon my uncle was launched upon one of his favorite themes: the right of the medieval church to execute people for heretical opinions, or as he put it: "for the crime of heresy." Secular society, my uncle said, punishes men only for crimes against the body; this is so rooted in the modern mind that when an American state wanted to punish a labor leader for his economic and political heresies it had to manufacture "evidence" to show he was "guilty" of bombing a preparedness parade. The contemporary device of the frame-up, said Uncle Peter, is the inevitable consequence of that error in logic and morals which assumes that crimes matter only when they injure matter.

"How much wiser was the medieval order!" my uncle exclaimed. "In those days secular means sustained spiritual ends; the state served the church as the body serves the soul; the world was centered on truth; it was the ministerial function of external polity to support the ecclesiastical authorities in maintaining the perpetual dominance and unity of truth. A heretic was rightly considered not only a heretic, but a dangerous foe of the whole of society who menaced the very lifespring of the temporal order as such."

"I think you are idealizing the Middle Ages," I said.

"What can show a greater care for men's souls," my uncle said, "or a higher ideal of dignity of the human community centered on truth than putting heretics to death? The modern secular order punishes murder by death; but is not a crime of opinion directed against the supreme truth upon which the existence and unity of a society rests a far greater and more terrible crime than murder?"

Uncle Peter said these things not in the spirit of casuistry and apologetics only; he meant them with all the sincerity of his soul. I am convinced that if his church condemned him for heresy he would gladly pay for that crime with his life: except that it would be unnecessary, since the church in its wisdom of the centuries has understood better than any other institution in Western history the spiritual and temporal value of granting the heretic a genuine chance at repentance, recantation and redemption.

For a historical student like myself, there was an even more interesting aspect to this matter: Uncle Peter actually admitted the possibility that a system putting people to death for their opinions might lead to abuse. He granted this all the more eagerly because it enabled him to maintain that this kind of abuse set in only *after* the ruin of medieval Christendom.

"It was only then," my uncle insisted, "that the state, ceasing to act as the instrument of a higher and legitimate spiritual authority, arrogated to itself and in its own name those rights of spiritual interference to which it has never been entitled."

"What spiritual interference are you talking about?" I asked.

"The enforcement of orthodox opinion by stake and scaffold," said my uncle, and proceeded to demonstrate with great subtlety and conviction the "logical and inevitable progression" from the heresy and absolutism of Henry VIII to the enlightened despotism of the eighteenth century to the Jacobinism of the French Revolution direct to the tyrannies of our own time.

I could not agree with Uncle Peter on all this; but in those days I was young enough to imagine that from "his viewpoint," as we used to say, he was not altogether wrong; for if we assume that *our* social order, whatever it may be, represents the sole form of highest truth, we are likely to believe it is duty-bound to crush heresy by all and every means: but any other social order whatever which does the same is merely abusing a solemn prerogative because it does *not* embody the sole highest truth. My uncle was just as indignant at abuses of the death penalty for opinion by secular states today as he was enthusiastic over the burning of John Huss by the medieval order; and in this he was profoundly human, which is to say profoundly mistaken, very much like Hansl and the fly, so typical of history's enigmas.

"Mamma! Mamma!" Hansl cries, "please stop sister from killing this poor little fly!"

"Ah, how kind you are, my son! Your heart goes out even to this humble insect!"

"No, no, mamma! I want to kill it."

As is nearly always the case in such discussions, Uncle Peter and I left each other wholly unconvinced. With considerable relief we turned to personal matters.

"I have good news for you, Paul," he said. "You can teach at the university this fall."

"Thank you for your help."

"What do you plan to do this summer?"

"I need a vacation," I said, "and I want to prepare the courses I'm going to teach. I think I'll do both on my favorite mountain."

"The Semmering?"

"Yes, I want to loaf a little in the fields, and daydream on the dizzy crags and look into the valleys below. And if there's no objection from the authorities, I'll lie on my back and just watch the clouds roll by."

"The mountain air will do you good," Uncle Peter said. "Meanwhile, how would you like to relax at a party tonight?"

"Whose party?"

"The hostess is an old friend of yours who often asks about you."

"The Countess zu Fassenheim," I said.

"Then it's settled," Uncle Peter said. "You'll come tonight. Everybody who is anybody will be there. For a young savant it's imperative to cultivate people like that."

"Some other time," I said. "I promised Father to see him this evening. I've hardly had a chance to talk with him."

"Ah," said Uncle Peter dryly. Then he smiled and added: "Come to see me as often as you can, won't you?"

When I reached the street it was already dusk, and by the time I reached the Daungasse night had fallen over the city. The lights in my father's office were out, and in my room I found a note saying he had gone out on some important business but would see me later that evening. I went to a near-by café and had dinner alone and listened with bored nostalgia to a small orchestra mechanically winding out the overture to *The Gypsy Baron* and melodies by Franz Lehar. Then I went back to my room. I did not turn on the lights, but stood at the window for a long time looking into the street. A few pedestrians turned the corner; a lone taxi blew its horn; everything appeared forsaken. I stretched out on the couch and thought of the days when Siegfried, Teddy Hoffman and Helga's brother fought beside me on the Piave; then I dozed off and had a queer dream in which I saw a huge skeleton standing on a little hill. His bony shoulders sagged as if he were weary and exhausted, and blood dripped from the huge sword in his hand. It was Death, and all around him there stretched a vast field of corpses and the far-off horizon was dotted with white crosses. Then slowly Death turned his empty sockets toward me and the bleached bones of his skull moved, saying with a sigh: "Ah, I almost pity mankind."

I was awakened in pitch darkness by voices in the hallway. Turning on the light, I looked at my watch and saw it was ten o'clock. Three hours of sleep had deeply refreshed me. I opened the door and saw a crowd of people as they came out of the elevator and entered Father's office. I followed them as far as the door of *The Future*. The room was crowded with men and women. Every chair was occupied and people pressed against each other standing along the

walls. The smoke of cigarettes, pipes and cheap cigars filled the air with dense gray clouds. I stood on the threshold where the crowd was beginning to spill over into the corridor. Heads and shoulders blocked my vision and I could not see my father, but his clear voice carried into the hallway. He was talking about the "world situation," rapidly sketching events on all the six continents, and his words as always were full of indignation against evil and hope for the good and certainty of the ultimate victory of freedom; but now, for the first time, I noticed a new strain in what he said; the list of defeats seemed to be greater than the list of triumphs, and the cause of liberty seemed to be on the way to fighting a defensive battle against the assaults of an old evil which now went by a new name.

"The oppressors," Father said, "are determined to chain the poor permanently to their poverty." Then he went on to explain in some detail how the prevailing system all over the world was experiencing a great revolutionary crisis.

Someone tapped me on the shoulder. I turned around and faced Steffi Dahn, my father's secretary.

"There's a phone call for you," she said. "I've switched it to your room."

At first I did not recognize Helga's voice over the phone. It had acquired a smooth, peremptory authority.

"Paul, darling," it purred. "Why didn't you let me know you were back? It will be so good to see you again! Do come over to my party. You'll meet some old friends and the place is full of pretty girls. Don't disappoint me, dear. I want to see how you look. Have you changed much? I do so want to see you!"

"Hello, Helga," I said. "How are you?"

"Why don't you come over and find out?"

"I can't."

"Are you ill?"

"Never felt better."

"Then come over."

The thunder of applause swept through the corridor into my room. They would be there for hours. Helga's voice was still talking into the phone.

"Are you *afraid* to see me, Paul?"

"Certainly not! I'll be right over."

3

*And bear about the mockery of woe
To midnight dances and the public show.
—To the Memory of
an Unfortunate Lady.*

HELGA LIVED IN AN OLD, elegant house in the Ring. I was ushered by a liveried servant into a large reception room whose ceiling blazed with brilliant chandeliers and whose walls were concealed by heavy tapestries. Men and women in evening dress stood about the room chatting in modulated tones and the air was heavy with perfume.

"Paul!"

It was Helga's voice behind me. I turned to face her. She was more beautiful than ever and there was a new look in her bright blue eyes; they glittered with a relentless force that seemed to demand something. Her golden hair was brushed smoothly back above her ears and tied in a low gleaming knot on the nape of her neck; and the white of her skin was startling against the black evening gown.

"Paul, dear, how are you?" she said. "How well you look! You must have had a grand time in Paris. Tell me all about it!"

She did not wait for an answer, but taking my arm with majestic grace introduced me to various people. She guided me around the crowded reception room and her voice had an assured dignity as she named the persons to whom she introduced me. I bowed to portly men in frock coats and high-ranking army officers whose uniforms glittered with decorations obtained in a war they had lost; and kissed the hands, wrinkled or smooth, of bejeweled dowagers and young women fragrant with sachet and perfume. Here was money, luxury, power; here was intellect and spirit, at least as represented by writers, actors, scientists, painters, and editors who had become rich or famous enough to be accepted in the homes of the elite. Some of the literary and theater people asked about my father. I was astonished to learn they knew nothing of his present activities, as if he lived on another planet, and still thought of him in connection with a past he had long ago discarded.

With a charming smile and the promise to return as soon as she had attended to some other guests, Helga deposited me with Uncle Peter, who was talking to a priest. I was introduced to Father Koch, a tall round heavy man on whose long black cassock gleamed a silver crucifix; his powerful head was completely bald, and there was a queer look about his eyes.

"Welcome home, my son," Father Koch said. "Your uncle tells me you are going to teach at the university. That is splendid."

It was then I noticed his left eye was totally blind. A servant brought us some champagne. Uncle Peter and I took some, but Father Koch declined, and turning to my uncle resumed the conversation my arrival had interrupted. As he began to rage about the recent attempt on the chancellor's life, I looked around the crowded room. The wine elated my senses and they absorbed with pleasure the movement of lights, perfumes and voices which filled the air. For a moment I thought of Babette and wished she were there. How she would have enjoyed all this!

There was gay laughter at one end of the room. Everybody seemed to be having a good time. Everybody who was anybody. The people in this room had to crawl on their hands and knees to Geneva and London; but here, in this truncated little realm along the Danube, they lorded it from the ultimate heights over all the nobodies. Such supreme power in any world, however small, whatever its secular and moral standards, always fills the privileged and their satellites alike with greater intoxication than any wine. If, as my father had said, the country was moving toward civil war, there was little sign of it here. Perhaps my father had exaggerated. Those who wish to liberate the world see the present in the darkest and the future in the brightest colors. The guests here were talking only of the most pleasant things—the latest operetta, the current novels, the coming summer holidays and the ridiculous shortcomings of their absent friends.

Through the chattering, mobile crowd I saw Siegfried beckoning me. I picked up a fresh glass of champagne from a passing butler and made my way to the other side of the room. Siegfried was alone, his eyes riveted on Helga, who stood against the white sliding doors near the curving staircase leading to the upper floor.

"I'm glad you came, Paul," Siegfried said.

"It's good you're here." I said. "I feel lost."

"The great man wants to meet you."

"Who?"

"Fritz Ritter. He's waiting for you at the casement window over there, on the other side of the room. I'll see you later."

I remembered the name of Helga's admirer, and had no trouble

finding him at the window. He was a wiry little man with a sparse mustache under his aggressive Roman nose. When he smiled, I could see his upper teeth, white and sharp, were much larger than the lower ones, like those of certain predatory animals.

"I did want to meet you," Ritter said. "Helga and Siegfried have told me a great deal about you."

I sat down on the window ledge beside him. The warm wind which came from the garden was like some divine elixir.

"Helga tells me you were on the Piave with her brother," Ritter said. I had never seen eyes like his before; one was brown, the other blue. "I was already an Austrian citizen when the war broke out and served as an officer on the Isonzo."

At this moment, a servant opened the sliding doors near the curved staircase and revealed a music room in which a chamber orchestra was tuning its musical instruments softly. When the applause of the guests died down, there was a brief silence of great intensity; then the strains of Gustav Mahler floated through the crowd. Ignoring the occasional cough or the rustle of a silk dress, the music filled the world with the harmonious accents of the spirit triumphant. At the end there was a trickle of puzzled applause from the frock coats, the uniforms and the dowagers, and enthusiastic bravos from the literati. Helga closed the sliding doors herself and, *with a happy smile, announced there would be more music later. I turned to Ritter.*

"Do you like Gustav Mahler?"

"Yes, yes, indeed," said Ritter. He spoke in the low restrained voice of men in power who like to conceal the full force of their will as they conceal the full extent of their riches. "Isn't music a marvelous thing? I remember a dinner on the Isonzo during the war. The staff of our corps sat around a large, U-shaped table—gray-haired generals, lank colonels, captains, majors and even lieutenants. We sat in a long barrack built of boards and galvanized iron. Through the walls we could hear the cannon roar back and forth across the deep Alpine gulch of the Isonzo. The old building shook with the thunder of the guns. We had finished our dinner; the orderlies were serving coffee and cigarettes; and now there ascended upon a small dais a Viennese musician. He was a pitiful creature in his muddy, bedraggled uniform. For a few moments we all watched him rather caustically, I'm afraid. Then he began to play Schubert's *Ave Maria* and—would you believe it, Herr Schuman?—tears began to roll down the leathery faces of those grim soldiers. We hardly dared to breathe and we no longer heard the cannon roaring outside. Some of the officers closed their eyes and bowed their heads, almost as if in prayer."

"Yes," I said, "such is the power of music." I wanted to be ironical; I wanted to argue with Ritter, to contradict him, to demonstrate how naïve and sentimental his taste in music was, that it was an insult to the intelligence of our times to compare the *Ave Maria* with Gustav Mahler. Then I felt ashamed. It suddenly dawned on me what he had really been trying to say: in the midst of universal massacre, men revere with tears in their eyes the accents of the human spirit which they have been compelled to abandon.

"By the way," Ritter said, "they tell me your father is quite an interesting man. A pity he did not stick to the theater. Helga tells me he was quite a figure in that field."

The disquiet I felt in Ritter's presence returned. A salon is a place where the hostess conducts a social lobby; where pleasure-lovers come to indulge their senses, climbers to seek opportunity for advancing their fortune, old friends to console each other in their loneliness, young people to find lovers or marriage partners; and where the man of affairs, whose will to power never slumbers, moves from group to group gathering bits of useful information.

"I know nothing about his affairs," I said. "They tell me you are interested in steel and finance."

"Yes. Unfortunately that compels me to be interested in politics, too; here, in Germany, in Europe, in fact everywhere. I am not a politician, you understand. Under normal circumstances, an industrialist like myself is likely to consider politics merely a second string to his bow, a preparation for his own particular kind of activity. There are conditions under which a man like myself can afford to abstain from politics. But then we must have a sound government, reasonable taxes and a really efficient police. With Europe in chaos, and in the face of that anarchy which the Marxists threaten to foist upon the world, a man like myself can't avoid the vortex of politics. We all must do our share in saving civilization from the Red menace, don't you think?"

"I am not an industrialist," I said, "and can avoid the vortex. Can I get you another drink?"

"Yes, thank you," said Ritter.

I walked across the room to get a drink, and at that moment Helga slid back the doors of the music room and we all stood still while the orchestra played the Brandenburg Concerto. Afterward I looked toward the casement window opening on the garden and saw Ritter surrounded by a smiling crowd of men and women. Some of the guests in various parts of the room were stifling yawns. It was getting late. Then Helga came to me and said in a very low voice:

"I haven't had a chance to talk to you in this crowd. It's past two and they'll be leaving soon. Wait for me in the music room."

I closed the sliding doors of the music room behind me. The orchestra was gone, but the lights were still on. I lit a cigarette and looked around. There was a painting on the wall which I recognized from reproductions I had seen in the magazines. Colonel Count zu Fassenheim looked very distinguished and very old in his black frock coat and red sash. Nobody had mentioned him all evening, as if he no longer existed or perhaps had never existed at all. Through the closed doors I could hear voices rising and dying away; the guests were leaving. Then everything was quiet and after a while the doors slid open and Helga came in. She looked tired suddenly and much younger, as though a mask had slipped from her face.

"Sit down, Paul," she said, pointing to a couch along the wall. "I must talk to you."

I sat down. Helga lit a cigarette and began to scold me.

"Paul, you *have* treated me badly! You know that, don't you? Not a single letter in a whole year! How can you do that to someone you've loved?"

Helga scolded me because it was her nature to scold. She always had to be in the right. To her it was inconceivable that she could wrong anyone. Moral responsibility was something to invoke for other people; for her there were always extenuating circumstances which left her without any apology or regret.

"I suppose you think I've treated you badly, too," Helga went on. "You ought to be man enough to allow for a woman's weaknesses. I'm a permanent part of your life. You'll never get rid of me. You can't. I'm in your blood. I was the first woman you ever loved."

"Yes," I said.

"Then you may as well know the truth. You were the first man I ever loved. That's something which can't happen twice to anybody." She crossed the room with quick, strong steps, sat down beside me, and said quietly: "You don't really hate me, do you, Paul?"

"Why should I?" I said.

"Did you love someone in Paris?"

"Yes."

"Was she nice?"

"Too nice to talk about."

"Paul, I haven't a friend in the world."

"Your house was full of people tonight."

"Yes—they came to see a countess."

"What about your husband?"

"I'd rather not talk about that now."

"You must have some friends."

"Are you one?"

"Why not?" I said.

"That makes me feel a lot better. Sometimes I think friendship is better than love. I'm glad."

"So am I."

She rose and took both my hands in hers smiling.

"And now, I'm very tired," she said. "Please don't wait too long before seeing me again."

In the cool night air I walked toward the Eighth District. By the time I reached the house on the Daungasse it was nearly three. Otto Weber, the elevator man, sat sleeping on a grocery box near the open car. He blinked his eyes, said good morning and we stepped into the car. For the first time I noticed a long, thin healed cut on his temple.

"You're wondering about my wound?" he said.

"I'm sorry," I said.

"That's all right. It's my war decoration."

"I'm a veteran, too."

We shook hands and he grinned.

"It was a great war," he said. "The rich got richer; the poor, poorer."

A dim electric lamp standing near one of the casement windows lit the top-floor hallway. I started for my room at the far end. Otto Weber, nobody, nobody at all. . . .

"Is that you, Paul?"

It was my father's voice. The door of his living quarters was open, and he stood on the threshold in bathrobe and slippers. His room was next to the offices of *The Future*, now dark.

"I waited up for you," he said. "Won't you come in for a minute?"

We sat down at the table in the center of the room and my father poured us some chilled beer.

"The meeting ended at midnight," Father said. "I looked into your room, but you were gone. Did you have a nice time?"

"I went to a party at Helga's. Do you remember her?"

"The actress?"

"The Countess zu Fassenheim. She asked about you. So did some theater people and writers. Also a man named Friedrich Ritter."

"The steel magnate?"

"Yes."

"A dangerous man," said my father. "He has his finger in the Continental arms cartel, and he cuts quite a figure behind the scenes in the Seipel regime. They say he finances various reactionary groups in Germany, too."

"Don't excite yourself," I said. "You've had a long day and there will be another one tomorrow. Why don't you get some sleep?"

"What about you?"

"All right," I said. "Good night, father."

"Good night, Paul."

He took me to the door and at the threshold I turned to him. I wanted to tell him something and did not know how. To leave Helga's party for the Daungasse was like walking from one armed camp to another. It was hard to believe that these pleasant people on both sides were, underneath all the charm and kindness, irreconcilable antagonists. It was disquieting to have sipped champagne with exalted personages whom my father considered mortal enemies of society, and particularly bent upon destroying him and his friends and his allies.

"What is it, Paul?" my father said. "Are you becoming an absent-minded professor already?"

"I forgot to tell you something, father."

"What is it, my son?"

"You are a remarkable fellow."

"Is that all?" said my father, laughing. "You'd better sleep on that profound thought. Good night, son."

4

*The murderer rising with the light killeth
the poor and needy, and in the night is as a
thief.*

—*The Book of Job.*

WHAT I LIKED BEST about the latter half of the twenties was my work at the university. With the aid of various friends I was able to publish my thesis on Condorcet. This gave me some standing in academic circles and by the time I had reached my twenty-seventh year I was permitted to teach several of the more advanced courses. I had a special affection for my freshman class in the origins of civilization. How bright, eager and sympathetic were these young people who brought the same enthusiasm to their studies as to their tennis matches and cocktail parties! Sometimes they reminded me of my younger self and of my fellow students in those far-off days when we sat on these very benches listening to our elders. But I knew better. Under the surface things were different. The Neue Sachlichkeit had set in, that dry objective spirit of fact, irony and combat calculated to meet the rigor of the times. I was conscious for the first time of the tread of a new generation crowding behind mine as we ascended the hills of time, and the new spirit made me feel ashamed of that lyrical and sentimental view of things which I hoped had left me.

No matter. With these boys and girls in my class I was able to travel back to the beginning of time, back across all of recorded history into those dark regions of the years where man had not yet appeared upon the earth.

"The important thing," Professor Gross once advised me with a twinkle in his eye, "is to impress upon the youngsters that it took at least 250,000,000 years to make a jellyfish; another 150,000,000 to make a fish with a backbone; and still another 50,000,000 to perfect the mammal. Then evolution assumed terrific speed, and it took a mere two and a half million years to achieve man—a mammal with a brain so far in advance of any other living creature that he is unique upon the earth. This will make it clear to them, maybe, that

Hammurabi is really our contemporary, and that history in the future may move even more rapidly than in the past."

I remember my classroom with its windows opening on the campus and the charts upon the wall and the students leaning across their desks or back in their chairs, ready to ask questions as I tried to tell them the saga of man. The course was sober enough. It was intended to solve such simple problems as how men make a living, how they live together and how they understand the world; and the charts duly spaced the intervals of time from the azoic era to the Reindeer men, from the age of bronze to the age of iron, down to the last fraction of an inch which, like a coda to the enormous stretch of time preceding it, indicated the flash of conscious being which led from the first Egyptian Pharaoh to the first fascist dictator. Yet when these ideas followed me outside the campus into the surrounding world, the proportions of everything changed, and the remote past, which seemed so immediate in the classroom, appeared unreal; while the newspaper headlines, which had appeared microscopic against the saga of man's march across space and time, struck you with the impact of a railway collision.

This was especially true whenever I spent some time with my father, for whom the past was something to be transcended, and the present a battlefield for man's control of the future. We still lived on the top floor of the Daungasse apartment house; and the offices of *The Future* were more alive than ever with the coming and going of people, with animated meetings, with the voices of orators lashing the evils of the world and urging men along what they insisted was the only road to salvation the twentieth century had to offer.

One night, shortly after my twenty-seventh birthday, I was dining with my father in a popular café. Our relations had changed somewhat. Like many parents, my father had hoped for a long time that I would join him in his work in one form or another. Then, seeing I insisted on going my own way, he was hurt and aloof. I found the rift between us very painful, suffered pangs of conscience and saw no way of solving the crisis. Soon my father took the initiative in effecting a reconciliation on a new basis of modified expectations on his part and a more sympathetic attitude on mine. For a while he teased me about learning everything from books and learning it badly; then he said in his old affectionate way that fish must swim, birds must fly, worms must crawl and every man must do what his nature requires him to do and that he loved me just as I was, and we became good friends again.

This particular evening we were dining in the café, drinking iced beer and chatting about nothing in particular.

"What are you teaching those boys and girls of yours, Paul?" my father said.

"We start them at the beginning of time."

"What for?"

"To give them a perspective on the beginning of tomorrow."

"Genesis?" said Father, laughing.

"Essentially, though the story is given in greater detail and never as poetically."

"For example," he challenged.

We drank beer and spoke of everything in the spirit of banter, and I planned to tell him about my work in that spirit. He would consider me sentimental and naïve if I told him how deeply I was affected by the epic of man's rise from chaos, slime and blood toward his dream of a world mastered and at peace. And who was I to tell him the story except as a kind of Viennese joke? Yet it fascinated me no end; and that moment in the saga when, after countless eons of darkness, man at last is born out of the womb of time, always made my heart beat high, as if I had been privileged to witness a miracle.

"What do you tell your students?" Father insisted.

"In the beginning," I said, "there was no beginning and the vast sun was moving through space. And in an hour of flame and incredible catastrophe the sun sent forth blazing fragments, and these cooled into dark and spinning balls which circled around the sun and shone in its light.

"And the earth was bare and terrible, and flames poured from volcanoes and streams of lava flowed far and wide, and not a tree or blade of grass showed on the surface of the earth, and only the tides stirred in the empty seas.

"And after millions of years, savage storms washed enormous mountains into the sea, and after millions and millions of years new mountains were heaved out of the waters, and it was the first era.

"And upon the earth there were lands and oceans, sunshine and tides, but no living thing, neither grass nor tree on the rocky hills, nor fish in the sea, nor life of any kind anywhere. And the earth was a bleak gloomy world of rock, lashed by mighty rains and rent by vast torrents. And millions of years came and went, and living things appeared upon the earth, jelly without backbone. And the earth's surface crumpled and vast lava floods broke through the molten rocks and the Archaean stones at the bottom of the great western canyon were folded aloft and the huge mountains were worn away to sea level. And time came and time went and it was the second era."

My father sipped his beer and looked at me in a strange silence, and I went on.

"And the mollusk got his shell and the fish his backbone. And millions of years came and went, and the earth cracked and trembled

and labored slowly upward and heaved new mountains aloft toward the sky, and sank new seas into the abysses, and it was the third era.

"And millions of years came and went, and there appeared upon the earth reptiles enormous and monstrous, and they ruled the land, the sea and the sky and vanished forever from the face of the earth. And the first bird appeared and the tiny mammals and the great apes, and it was the fourth era.

"And a great and terrible cold swept the earth, and the millennia came and went, and great sheets of ice covered vast areas of the earth, and the white terror inched down from the north in terrible majesty and power. And the great realm of ice advanced and retreated and advanced and at last retreated, and in one of the warmer spells a strange animal appeared upon the face of the earth, born of the amoeba from which sprang all living creatures. And it resembled the great apes and it was different from them and it was man."

Father's face was now grave and attentive, and I was surprised at the patience with which he listened to the story, and I went on.

"And man learned to stand erect and to oppose his thumb to his fingers, and his brain grew and he uttered sounds of speech. And man was without tusk or claw or shell or hide, and man by the power of his mind mastered the beasts of prey in the forests and fields of the world. And man founded families and groups, and made weapons for war and the chase, and discovered fire and made tools for his labor. And the first race of man came and went and vanished from the face of the earth and it was the fifth era.

"And another race of man came upon the earth, and they hunted the reindeer and the bison and the bear and the elephant and the pony, and they harpooned the fish and made spears, needles and bones. And they drew images upon their walls, and painted the woolly mammoth on the sides of their caves, and they worshiped the animals they hunted for these gave them sustenance. And the millennia came and went, and this race of men vanished utterly from the face of the earth and it was the sixth era.

"And a new race of men appeared upon the face of the earth, and they made polished tools of stone, and they herded cattle and planted seed in the earth, and the earth fed them. And man planted grain and baked bread, and man built mills for grinding flour and houses to dwell in, and raised megaliths to his gods, and prayed to his gods with ritual and ceremony. And men lived together in groups and owned their land in common.

"And man had a long animal life behind him, and man was a beast of prey, and man hunted and killed and ate animals and fish and his fellow men. And man discovered metals and civilization was born. And man did not eat his war captives and they worked for him

and slavery was born. And Egypt and Babylon came into the world and man discovered writing and history was born."

My father smoked thoughtfully and for several minutes we looked at each other in the silence of mutual understanding. Then he laughed softly, and said:

"Well, this certainly calls for a drink. You must be thirsty." He motioned to the waiter to refill our beer glasses. "There was one point you should have stated more emphatically, though. Those jungles and forests and fields in which man evolved were filled with cries of terror and exultation, and the grass was drenched with blood. Man, born a beast, has always made progress as a beast."

"That's true," I said, "but there's a miracle here also—a miracle and a mystery. We still do not know how the amoeba became Amos. Man is still a beast, but he is a beast who dreams of love, hope, faith, justice, freedom and equality. And all in a mere ten thousand years!"

"Science will someday unravel all the secrets of man's origins," said Father with his usual confidence. "We shall even unravel such mysteries as love, hope and the rest of it. Why talk of miracles? Everything is historically conditioned. Freedom is the recognition of necessity, and today equality can only mean the abolition of classes."

Once Father struck that note, it was inevitable that he should seize upon the present moment to illustrate his point, and before long he was giving me a vivid outline of the current crisis in our country. With some of it, I was already familiar. Apart from what I had read in the newspapers and heard at the offices of *The Future*, there were ominous rumors which had reached me at Helga's parties. These were now held in another house on another street, for Helga was no longer the Countess zu Fassenheim. For some time she had been unweaving the slender threads which attached her to her aged, absent husband. Once, in the earlier stages of this domestic conflict, she had confided to me that her husband hated her; he resented her youth, beauty and energy, and was devoured by a senile jealousy. Later she admitted it was the other way around; it was she who hated him, and resented the bonds which tied her to a man incapable of participating in life. She tried to explain the causes of her extreme restlessness. Life, she said, was short; and she wanted all the love, money and power it could give her. She said this without cynicism, simply as a statement of her natural rights.

She even clothed the hectic social life she led in an ideal form: she was really a fighter in one of the great crusades of the modern world, the struggle to emancipate women. To be sure, Helga's notion of emancipation was different from the ideal of the women who came to the meetings of *The Future*. Unblessed with the privileges

of birth, money and culture, condemned to earn their bread by the sweat of their brows, these women imagined their freedom was indissolubly connected with the freedom of all the oppressed classes and races of the world. Helga, on the other hand, considered the emancipation of woman a purely personal affair to be achieved by acquiring and discarding lovers, conducting the most complex social intrigues and exercising power in artistic, literary, musical and political circles. As a rule, she enjoyed this private crusade hugely. But in moments of fatigue or despair—and the frustration of her slightest whim was enough to plunge her into the lowest abyss of despair—she was not above posing as a martyr to whom the free and happy women of the future owed a statue in the public square.

The old count looked upon all this from the distance of his watering places with mingled resentment and contempt, and it was rumored in Vienna that he was planning to abandon the farce of their disorderly, desperate marriage. At a crucial turn in the conflict however, he suffered a stroke at Carlsbad which killed him almost instantly.

Helga rushed to the watering place at once, dressed in the most stunning black clothes money could buy, and gave her late husband an elaborate funeral. She returned to Vienna disconsolate, wept copiously at the mere mention of the old count's name, and blamed herself for not taking better care of him, although she made it quite clear that in this respect she had failed only by the narrowest of margins. In her anxiety to be a remarkable woman in every possible respect, she felt it necessary to have been married to a remarkable man, all the more remarkable now that he was dead. The belated devotion and praise which she lavished on her late husband had their practical consequences. It added the attractions of a good wife to those of a woman still young and beautiful, and brought her a number of proposals from distinguished men too busy with their affairs to know the true story. Fritz Ritter, of course, knew more of the truth than anyone else; but the flood of proposals which came to Helga worked upon that vanity which impels certain men to take what other men desire. Ritter had done his best to keep his ardent admiration for the young countess within the reasonable bounds of a pleasure unburdened with responsibility; now he could not bear the idea that some other man might marry her. He hastened to propose, and Helga took the appropriate amount of time to consider a marriage she had planned for several years. At last she said yes, and early in the year which I am describing, the couple were married at St. Stephen's. Afterward they opened a sumptuous apartment in the Ring, and Helga once more gave her endless round of parties and dances to which everybody who was anybody came.

It was at one of these parties that Ritter himself told me some-

thing which foreshadowed the events of the summer to come. He said the apparent economic boom which had revived the country for a short time had collapsed like a house of cards. The workers' insurance law did not meet the situation and the people were restless. Chancellor Seipel was still talking about the Second Austria, the reconstruction of souls and the need for crushing socialism. But, according to Ritter, these old phrases were beginning to take on a more practical aspect.

"I saw Kurt von Schuschnigg the other day," he told me, at one of his parties, referring to the man who was to be our last chancellor. "He said our bloc is determined to take the offensive against the socialists."

"Who is in your bloc?" I asked.

"Everybody," said Ritter, using that word as if those who did not agree with him simply did not exist. "Monarchists, nationalists, political Catholics, anticlerical conservatives, avowed fascists and people who claim they are against fascism but want to exterminate the socialists for their own reasons." He said this in his usual bland way, as if he were observing that it might rain, or that the Tokay was a little too sweet; then he added with a grin which revealed his larger upper teeth: "As a matter of fact, our Heimwehr tried to make an alliance with the local Nazis, but the latter backed out. The trouble with the Nazis is that they want to run everything. But who knows? They may have the right answer for us in the long run."

This was serious news. The Heimwehr, the so-called Home Defense, was a reactionary military organization privately maintained by industrialists and landlords. It was known that the chancellor encouraged it to combat the Schutzbund, the Defense Corps of the labor and socialist organizations. But if I imagined that what Ritter had told me would surprise my father, I was mistaken. When I repeated the story to him, he reflected for a moment and said quietly:

"I told you long ago they want our blood. The counterrevolution is on the march to conquer the whole of Europe. They will launch an attack on the Socialist Fatherland. What fantastic dreams these swine have! They want to organize the whole world on the basis of empire and slavery. But they'll have to reckon with us first!"

These conversations took place in the spring of my twenty-seventh year; later it turned out to be one of those years a man never forgets. I felt the excitement gathering step by step on the top floor of the house on the Daugasse where meetings over which my father presided voiced their indignation from the very day when the Schattendorf murders took place.

Schattendorf is a small town on the Hungarian border. One day a detachment of the labor Defense Corps was drilling in the streets.

A good-natured crowd of men, women and children watched them. Suddenly, without provocation or warning of any kind, a troop of Heimwehr appeared and fired into the crowd. Two workers and a boy were killed.

Several of the Heimwehr men were arrested, taken to Vienna and charged with murder. There was not the slightest doubt of their guilt; the question was whether the court would declare them guilty. Twice before, uniformed native fascists had killed innocent people. They had been tried. They had been acquitted. The courts had maintained they had shot in self-defense!

The Schattendorf murders roused indignation throughout the country. Labor felt things had gone far enough. The spirit of resistance ran high at the meetings which I attended in the offices of *The Future*.

"The Schattendorf affair," my father said at one meeting, "is the clearest example of the war of the rich against the poor. We know who encourages the Heimwehr. We know who will seek to clear the killers. We must not permit it. There was no excuse whatever for this wanton, cold-blooded murder. Go back to your organizations. Demand that justice be carried out against the killers!"

It was a hot summer night. Beads of perspiration stood out on my father's brow as he looked around the room. The people sat in tense silence, their faces grim with determination.

"Resist this tyranny," my father cried. "If they beat us this time, we shall lose much more in the end."

A week later, a court acquitted the Schattendorf murderers. At this cynical violation of elementary justice, a shudder went through the city. I sensed it in the café near the Ring where I read a newspaper account of the verdict. It was imperative to see Father at once. I started toward the Daungasse, but it was already becoming impossible to move freely. Spontaneously the workers came pouring into the streets to voice their indignation. The crowd billowed forward and swept me back to the café. I went inside and telephoned Father. He had already heard all about the verdict and was not surprised when I said:

"There's something going on in the Ringstrasse. Thousands of people are marching toward Parliament. Mounted police are collecting near the Palace of Justice."

"Where are you?" my father asked. I gave him the name of the café from which I was phoning. "Stay where you are," he said calmly. "I'll meet you there in ten minutes."

In his excitement, my father arrived without a hat. We joined the crowd at once. It was becoming very dense along the Ringstrasse. We were swept along past the statue of the Empress Maria Theresa,

the museum of art and natural history with their identical domes. And now we were marching in good order toward the Schmerlingplatz, the large square in front of the Palace of Justice which housed the law courts where the Schattendorf verdict had just been handed down. In the distance I could see the roofs of the university, where for the past three years I had been revealing to young people the mysteries of the Ice Age.

It was only ten o'clock in the morning but the crowd kept growing. New arrivals pushed us out of the ranks and Father and I found ourselves on the sidewalk watching the demonstration move toward the Palace of Justice. There were banners bobbing up and down in the air and we could make out some of the slogans on them:

We march, we demonstrate against judicial terror!

The crowd was typically Viennese. Despite the nature of the protest, it was in excellent humor, and all sorts of jokes and wisecracks rippled through the ranks. It seemed we had missed something. Just as the demonstration had started, old Seitz, Social Democratic mayor of the city, had made a speech. He had begged the crowd to maintain order, to go home. But the Schattendorf murder verdict was too fresh for the people to abandon their protest. They were glad to maintain order, but the place to maintain it they felt, was in the streets. They were now joking about the old mayor's reaction to the crisis, and they were very good-natured about everything and very orderly.

Then we saw the demonstration stop in the Schmerlingplatz, as if it were unable to make headway. Suddenly, from somewhere behind the Parliament building a few streets away, there came queer, distant popgun sounds.

"They're shooting," my father said.

We turned instinctively toward the Schmerlingplatz and saw in the sunlight over the heads of the crowd the bright flash of naked swords. People were milling and shouting all around us and I lost sight of Father in the endless throng. Ahead voices were crying with the strange tension of combat:

"They are shooting at us!"

There was sweat under my armpits; my temples began to throb violently. I had been in battle on the Piave, but this was something entirely different, and I could not think what the difference was. The living mass behind me kept pushing forward with irresistible force and I could not make out one person from another; the bodies writhed, the voices shouted and the stream of humanity roared and surged forward passionately until I found myself near the Palace of Justice stumbling against something which lay in the street. I recovered my balance and looked down. It was the dead familiar body of

a young girl and her face was wholly obscured by a thick, red gruel of blood.

Dead and wounded lay all about the square, the dead and wounded of the common people, and the sight of them enraged the crowd. They were beating the police, tearing them off their horses, pushing them relentlessly toward the Palace. Further down the square I could see workers bringing up iron scaffolding rods and park railings and trying to build barricades, the traditional street ramparts of Europe's proletariat. Rifle and revolver shots cracked in the summer air, and police sabers came down upon the heads of unarmed people. We fought back any way we could, and all thought left my mind and my heart stood still and my blood cried out with indignation at injustice and I found myself dragging a policeman from his horse and rolling with him under the feet of the crowd and the neighing beasts. I knocked him cold with three blows of my fist, and stood up and wiped my sleeve across my mouth to stanch the flow of my own blood. And now my heart pounded furiously and I wondered where Father was and if he was hurt, and the crowd swept me forward with it across the square filled with that vast human roar in which primitive self-preservation was identical with the dream of liberty.

We drove the police into the Palace, but they kept firing at us through the windows, and men and women dropped to their knees or fell upon their faces, and the blood of the common people stained the square dark red. It was strange to hear the whang of bullets again, this time from the guns of your own countrymen firing upon the innocent and the unarmed, and that was the difference I had wondered about.

Then the shooting stopped. It was clear the police had exhausted their ammunition. I could see workers running in front of the crowd toward the law courts. They carried oil and gasoline cans, shouting clear across the Schmerlingplatz:

"We're going to burn that damned building!"

"The curse of the people!"

"The Palace of Injustice!"

Wildly men and women swirled ahead of me and I was drenched in perspiration and the blood trickled slowly from my mouth with its dark taste of salt.

A great shout rose out of the crowd. From the Palace of Justice ahead of us curled wisps of smoke. And now the crowd became greater and more dense, and the news rippled through its ranks. From mouth to mouth, from heart to heart the joyous news spread: the telephone workers, the transport workers had called an hour's strike! They were joining the demonstration in the Schmerlingplatz!

The crowd began to loosen and fall back as bright flames burst

out of the Palace of Justice, and the thick, heavy smoke rolled skyward in black columns. Fresh police troops entered the square and began making arrests. By this time I was near a side street. It was some minutes before I realized that I was moving swiftly with no destination in mind. I slowed down and walked home to the Daungasse, holding my handkerchief to my bleeding mouth.

The corridor was very silent; the doors were locked. They must have all been at the demonstration. I went to my own room and examined my face in the mirror. Nothing serious. There was a slight cut under my right eye and my lips were swollen, that was all. I applied some antiseptic and sat down to smoke and wait for Father.

How did I get mixed up in this anyway? I disliked all kinds of practical politics and subscribed to no extremist views of any kind. I was what used to be called a moderate, or (like my friend Russell Hague in New York) a liberal. In his more ironic moments, my father used to kid me about my preoccupation with the past, my love of analysis and introspection. He said it was a decadent evasion of the great social problems of the present. All right, *de gustibus*. Maybe the Leftist's preoccupation with the masses was a decadent evasion of self-knowledge; maybe Father's friends were people who dared not look into their own souls for fear of what they might discover there. *Quién sabe?* Certainly I had no use for Chancellor Seipel's policies, which so fascinated Uncle Peter, Fritz Ritter and —of all people!—Siegfried Gross. But I could hardly despise the old cleric's call for *Seelensanierung*, that sanitation of the soul without which Europe could never rise out of the chaos, slime and blood into which it was receding. I did not subscribe to the theory of the "two fronts," yet here I had been caught in the maelstrom of the conflict, and had even exchanged blows with the guardians of the law who wanted to purify the souls of the people with bullets. No, it wasn't only the accident that I was my father's son and that I loved him. The "two fronts" had broken up many families. It was something else. Regardless of politics, what honest man could stand by and see innocent people shot down like dogs without doing something about it?

It was midnight when Father at last returned. He came to my room and asked how I felt and whether I was hurt. I said I felt fine and saw that a broad piece of adhesive tape covered his left temple. He assured me it was nothing serious, and explained his disappearance: he had to see that the wounded were taken to hospitals and that those arrested had lawyers. Then he asked me to join him in the offices of *The Future*.

There were four or five people in the room. They were all calm;

some even smiled; yet there was an air of gravity about them. Teddy Hoffman sat in a corner smoking a pipe, and his head was heavily bandaged. He smiled as I came in, waved his hand and said: *Freundschaft!* Father at once sat down at his desk, and the committee proceeded to take stock of the day. The police massacre on the Schmerlingplatz had cost the workers eighty-four lives, and two hundred and fifty-six had been arrested. The workers were going to call a general strike in protest, and they must get busy right away.

At two o'clock in the morning the conference broke up, and Father accompanied me to my room. He said good night and was about to leave; then he hesitated and said simply:

"Thanks, Paul."

He wasn't really thanking me for anything; he wanted to say he was glad I had acted as I did. But there was something else he was waiting to say; I could see that by his hesitation.

"That was too bad about Steffi Dahn," he said finally, and walked off in silence to his room, his white head bent low.

I knew now why the body across which I had stumbled in the square had seemed so familiar despite the wild surge of the crowd. Poor Steffi. I hardly remembered her name, I had never taken the trouble to find out anything about her. She used to move quietly and efficiently around the offices of the magazine seeing that what had to be done was done on time, by the right person, in the right way. She had never complained and never asked anything for herself, and she died fighting on the Schmerlingplatz.

Later that summer the workers did conduct a general strike. I read about it during my vacation on the Semmering. It was a beautiful summer and the mountain was very beautiful. I prepared my lecture on the Assyrian kings and read in the papers that the workers had not forgotten the Schattendorf murders, the cynical verdict of the courts, the massacre on the Schmerlingplatz.

I was rapidly forgetting it, however. The last time I thought about it that year was when I came back in the fall. The night before the university was to open, there was a meeting in my father's office, and I dropped in toward the end because I had nothing else to do. Father was addressing the crowded room again:

"The government has not been content to oppose the general strike with its own legal power. It called in armed fascist Heimwehr bands to aid it in the war against the people. Its immediate aim has been achieved. The general strike has been crushed. The tension in the country at one point became immense, incalculable. Fascist Heimwehr troops in the provinces threatened to march on Vienna. Labor organizations prepared to defend the city. For the time being, the crisis has been eased in the shameful manner which has become

typical of our times. Our Social Democratic friends calmed the troubled waters with the usual magic formula which in the end will be the undoing of us all."

I saw Teddy Hoffman smoking his pipe in a corner. His face flushed red, and he started to take notes furiously, as if he intended to answer the charge at some more appropriate time, and at great length.

"They proposed a general disarmament. They offered to cooperate with the very government which openly threatens to destroy labor. Everybody knows the chancellor supports the Heimwehr. Everybody suspects he leans toward a native brand of fascism. But remember this: the real power of the Heimwehr dates from this very year when it has been officially called in to kill workers and suppress their organizations. And something else dates from this year. The republic headed by Monsignor Seipel is nursing the monster which one day will strangle it!"

I went to my room at the other end of the corridor, and sat down to prepare some notes for the new class in the origins of civilization I had to face the following morning.

It turned out to be a difficult class. It had been nurtured on war, revolution, counterrevolution and the reign of bitter poverty. It was restless. Europe was restless. That fall an unemployed youth tried to kill Karl Seitz, Socialist mayor of Vienna.

5

*My soul, alas, is an ebony mansion,
Where, one evening, was noiselessly broken
The great mirror of my hopes.*

—*Les flambeaux noirs.*

VIENNA'S CHURCH BELLS were pealing through the crisp winter air, joyously announcing the New Year. It was early in the morning, and the town was quiet. I stood shaving before the mirror, and listened to the chimes and tried to think why I did not feel joyous this glorious holiday morning.

For one thing, it was my thirty-third birthday. That was enough to depress anybody. In your twenties, every birthday is a great event. It brings you nearer to some vague goal you are expected to achieve in maturity. Your thirtieth birthday is something else again. On that day Time hits you with a sledge hammer across the heart and says:

"Wake up, fool! You have slept your youth away!"

You wake up long enough to realize that your lyrical dreams have vanished. You have become a sober, prosaic history professor whose life is now routine. You have made a thousand compromises with the world and yourself which long ago you swore you would rather die than accept. Now you stand scraping your open razor along your bristled chin and realize you have made the typical journey of your kind. You have traveled from the realm of high aspiration to the realm of the philistines. Everything is in its proper little place now. Every day you rise at the same time, eat the same breakfast at the same café, read the same newspapers and think the same thoughts. Every day you walk to the same classroom and say the same things to students who, in your jaded eyes, appear to be more or less the same as the year before. Every night you return to your room, read, smoke and write letters; then, on a free evening, you go to the home of a friend and drink wine, and dance with the same women, chatter with the same men, and you all talk about the loftiest things lightly and about the most trivial things earnestly.

It is all very pleasant and you would fight like a tiger—a Vien-

nese tiger, to be sure—if anyone tried to take these things away from you. Nevertheless, you know it has become a routine; the poetry has gone out of things.

The worst part of the compromise is that you like it. Naturally, you pay for it, too. Nothing is free in this world. You pay for it all because, as Uncle Peter would say, you are full of sin. You merely say you are full of boredom—and that is your punishment. But the punishment is light, and there are pleasant cures for it. There is always the Semmering for summer vacations, and several times you are a house guest at Helga's palatial mountain home in the Tyrol. That is one advantage of having exalted friends. They are frightfully egotistical and self-centered, but what are you? Then there are books, concerts, plays and movies. Especially movies.

It is very hard to shave with cold water. For the rent I pay in this place, they ought to have the decency to let you have warm water early in the morning, especially on New Year's Day. Finally, there is the most pleasant compensation of all for these philistine compromises. It is a kind of romantic concubinage which the elite of Europe accept as a matter of course and which they call love. A century of literature from the days of Rousseau and those of George Sand has made it impossible for an educated man to touch a woman without some element of love in the relationship. I knew a Viennese poet once who spent a night with a prostitute in a bordello. The following morning he wrote a sonnet in which she appeared as a radiant, unsullied angel who by the innocence of her soul had awakened the slumbering purity of his own. I've never gone that far. I cannot write sonnets and it is equally impossible for me to touch a prostitute. For the sake of argument, however, I am ready to grant the chastity of her soul. Who am I to contradict Dostoyevski? I must get this razor honed before I chop my face to pieces.

Think of the women you have known intimately in the past ten years. Think of the romantic speeches you made to each other. How real was it? Of one thing I'm certain: the love between us, however slight, was genuine at the core. But I also know it was impossible to be a child of this age without sharing its hypocrisy. I lied and was lied to. We were all, perhaps, a little like that Viennese poet. Normally, the erotic is good, but for centuries the authorities said it was evil. Therefore we could no longer have it unless we lied about it, above all unless we lied about it to ourselves. We meant to say: *I desire you*. We hurried to say: *I love you*. Thereby we tarnished a phrase we ought to have reserved for the woman we were destined to love truly, whom we would perhaps marry, with whom we ought to have children. That was just the point! Who wanted

to get married or have children these days? Who could afford it in this age of poverty and insecurity? What future could you offer your offspring in a world rapidly going to pieces? No, it was safer to have those tepid affairs in which the girl trembled lest you abandon her while you still had your income, or your income abandoned you while you still had her; and you pretended that economic necessity played no part in this whatever. Go on. Look across the table at her, look into her eyes and say: *Wenn ich dich liebe, was geht es dich an*, and hope against hope that Goethe's phrase will conceal the shabby compromise you have made with the world and yourself.

Yes, you got used to everything, especially if you were a lucky dog who had a steady income from the university and through the shrewd advice of Uncle Peter and Helga's friends had managed to save his small inheritance from the crash of the Kredit Anstalt. What a crash that was! What financial catastrophe, what widespread suffering! Humpty Dumpty. All the king's horses and all the king's men couldn't put it together again. But thank heaven for the jolly Viennese spirit. The day the great bank collapsed, our good burghers calmly took their customary coffees at their customary café tables and read the really important news of the day. The newspapers featured it in the biggest headlines: there was a deficit in the Burgtheater! Those were the things to be excited about. Under all circumstances, let life be pleasant. If you must worry, why worry about the Heimwehr or the Nazis? Think of it, the whole of Vienna is in an uproar because Jeritza missed a high C in *Tannhaeuser*!

So you got used to compromise, and went on pleasantly from year to year; you taught your classes historic time and yourself ignored living time, and believed against your better judgment that in the end all the troubles of the world would be solved by one great, beautiful compromise which would settle matters favorably for moderate, sensible people like yourself.

That was the trouble with birthdays. They suddenly reminded you time was alive, that it rushed past your pleasant routines and compromises. Vienna's church bells were pealing through the crisp winter air, and I was thirty-three years old, and the century was thirty-three years old, and when you considered everything, what the devil were those bells joyous about? A fine decade! Bank failures, breadlines, suicides, hunger, poverty, war. The Far East was at it already. How long could the West stave it off? Ring out, wild bells, ring out the old, ring in the new. Oh, the new was all about us! Britain was off the gold standard, bankruptcy paralyzed the Continent, old Chancellor Seipel was dead and the new chancellor—charming, pious, lovable little Engelbert Dollfuss—assured us Mussolini would come to our rescue in the nick of time.

Dollfuss, the pygmy magician, said the café wits.

An old political type, said my father. The cunning, simple peasant playing the game of sophisticated aristocrats.

Thank you, wild bells, for the Third Austria. Let's hope it will be better than the Second. It certainly could not be worse.

What a way to greet the New Year! Maybe it was the celebration you attended last night with your students. That made you feel young, didn't it, professor? But you knew you could not drink like in the old days. Mixing wine and beer! Every sin has its consequences; you have nobody to blame for your headache except yourself. But perhaps it is hunger that makes you growl like this. At twenty-three you could skip any number of meals for the sake of Babette or a good history of the French Revolution. At thirty-three you cannot think until you've had your coffee. Habit, routine, compromise. Nevertheless, there's something heroic in it after all. Think of surviving the past three years without shooting yourself as so many of your fellow citizens have. A new, moderate heroism. Another compromise. No matter how degraded being has become, the new Hamlet must answer his own question categorically: To be!

I cleaned my razor, washed, dressed and straightened out my rooms. There were two of them now, a study and a bedroom. The latter contained a bed for the solitary sleep of a bachelor and for nights of romantic concubinage. The study contained a couch on which friends slept now and then—a writer out of funds, a fellow teacher out of a job, a friend of Father's passing through the city. Janos Vekely had spent several weeks there last year before going off to China to cover the Japanese invasion for *The Future*. Immerman had spent a month on his way from the Balkans to Berlin. These men whose home was the world slept and ate where they could. That was comradeship. Father did not hesitate to quarter them in my place, and I was glad to have them. They were good company, they had new and strange things to tell, and as long as they were around they created the illusion that I was not lonely.

I no longer lived on the Daungasse, but in an apartment house near the university. I had come here after my father had moved his magazine to Floridsdorf, the industrial suburb in the Twenty-first district across the Danube. He liked the new workers' apartment houses which had sprung up there in the past few years; he wanted to be near the people who meant most to him and to publish his paper in their midst. I preferred to remain in the center of town, near my work and the people I associated with, mostly the academic crowd on the campus and the literary groups in the cafés.

I did the rooms myself because only the rich could afford a serv-

ant these days. Then I went downstairs, picked up my mail and sauntered up the street to a café. It was still early, the church bells were still ringing their joyous greetings across the skies and I was practically alone among the café tables. I had some breakfast and read my mail. There were many New Year's cards. Here was one from Uncle Peter. Several years ago, I refused to have anything to do with him because his only comment on the Schmerlingplatz massacre was that the victims had deserved it. Politics can make the kindest men cruel. Afterward we made up our quarrel. Here was a letter from Janos Vekely in Sofia, and one from Rudolf Immerman in Berlin. The holiday greeting from Professor Boucher in Paris was very warm; the letter from Professor Gross full of cheer and courage despite his ironic comments on the trend of the times. Alas! the good humor and fortitude of these men did not help me. The facts which their spirits transcended filled mine with gloom. Helga's letter also was cheerful. She said she was having a wonderful time in Italy; unfortunately, she seldom saw Ritter; he was so busy pulling wires to obtain Mussolini's aid for our country that he had little time for his wife.

Siegfried's letter was different. He was not ashamed to complain of his troubles. Poor Siegfried. He never did get that loan from Ritter. The ten rich patients who were to launch his great medical career never showed up. He had no office in the Ring. He had no office at all. He was one of the countless panel doctors working for the government at a pathetic salary. All the professions had been hard hit by the economic catastrophe, and Siegfried's was no exception. He was lucky to be even a panel doctor. Many of his colleagues sat around their sparsely furnished offices waiting for patients whose illness was acute enough to triumph over their poverty. But Siegfried's letter was not without his native, biting humor. He described in some detail a popular play he had seen no less than three times, thanks to the fact that he had treated the theater manager free of charge. It was the work of the famous Viennese poet Schoenherr and was called *Well, Doctor: Have You Eaten Anything?* Siegfried threatened to solve his own financial problems by writing another play called *Well, Lawyer: Have You Eaten Anything?* These days, he said, you could put that question to any of the professions and the answer would always be no.

Ah, a letter from Russell Hague, and not a very cheerful one. Of all the changes, this was the most disquieting. Hague was normally as gay as a college boy and as optimistic as a cereal ad in one of his own magazines. All through the twenties he had written me the most exuberant letters from New York, full of his own success, but also full of the buoyant rush of universal prosperity

which had made us think of America as *das Land der unbegrenzten Moeglichkeiten*: the land of boundless possibilities. He was proud of the technological revolution which was transforming his country into a veritable paradise for all. He saw the Machine Age dissolving the agricultural order of Jackson's day and was convinced that the accelerated prosperity would eventually put a chicken in every pot and two cars in every garage. Hague's letters used to glitter with the most amazing figures. Think of it! A nation of twenty-five million families with three million radio sets, fifteen million telephones, twenty million autos and twenty-five million cash customers at the movies *every day*! Even the proletariat had its own radios, cars and telephones, not to speak of housing programs, insurance schemes and banks. And America was having fun! It was at last breaking the oppressive chains of puritanism; it was discovering wine, woman and song; learning, philosophy and art. This, said Hague, was the dawn of the gods.

Later Hague's letters from New York became progressively gloomy. The great economic catastrophe hit America, too. The prosperity promised around the corner receded into some mysterious, faraway cave from which nobody could lure it and which nobody could even locate. Now came the suicides, the breadlines, the unemployed demonstrations, the march of starving war veterans, the spread of radical sentiment, and Hague was worried. The picture was familiar enough to me, living on a continent which had been going to pieces for two decades. To be sure, I knew that even at worst America would never know the dire poverty to which we had become accustomed. Even my father, who had no faith whatever in the old system of things, admitted that "America still had plenty of fat." Nevertheless, Hague's letters were disquieting. If the greatest and richest of the countries based on the old economy could have its prosperity shattered, what hope was there for the poorer, more backward European lands? Still Hague's optimism always bobbed up in the end. The Democratic candidate for whom he had voted the previous fall had been elected President of the United States.

"I have a hunch," Hague concluded, "and a darned good hunch that he will find some way out of the crisis."

The café was becoming crowded now. It must have been toward eleven o'clock, because even the literary geniuses who slept long and wrote little were already at their accustomed tables reading the foreign newspapers, playing chess and exchanging anecdotes. The church bells began to peal again and Vienna started the day with jokes. There was a whole collection of them about the tiny stature of our new chancellor and I could hear them, old and new, going the rounds of the tables nearby.

"Have you heard the one about Dollfuss falling off a ladder while picking dandelions?"

"Don't laugh at the man. His pygmy proportions are a political asset."

"You don't say."

"The upper classes idolize him because he is a dwarf in stature, an unsophisticated child in spirit, an awkward orator, a peasant by origin, and a devout Catholic."

"You forgot to mention that he is a bastard by birth as well as temperament."

"Very brilliant, gentlemen. After all, to what nobler purpose can you apply your superior brains than to malign the only man who can save the republic?"

I started to leave the café. A casual acquaintance stopped me; he wanted to borrow money. It was impossible to live these days without borrowing. The government had to declare a moratorium on the debts of its employees. Before I had reached the door, no less than three beggars pleaded for something special on New Year's. Did they still remember the days when they were respectable members of the community, with work, position and security? That was a long time ago. Outside the boulevard was full of them. I took the Stephansplatz bus, crossed the bridge to Floridsdorf and went to the place where my father lived.

Here the socialist government of Vienna had built a series of apartment houses for the workers. What pride these people took in their houses! No more ratholes where mold covered the beds and vermin crawled on the walls. The Floridsdorf houses, part of the city-wide building program, were modern in design; they had courtyards, fountains and clubrooms; they had their own theaters, gymnasiums, swimming pools and gardens. The rooms were new and clean and full of sunlight. All of it was a paradise and a symbol. The workers were proud of their flats; they were even more proud of the idea which had given them those flats. They considered each of the houses—the Karl Marx Court, the Goethe Court, the Lassalle Court, the Engels Court, the People's Court—a bastion of socialism, crying out to the world: see what can be done when people unite for a great common purpose! Yes, the plain people were proud of their city. They boasted of the New Vienna; they pointed to the reforms in municipal administration, the new ways of handling finances and taxes and wages for city employees; they were proud of the public facilities for social welfare, child care, recreation and health. They used to take visitors to see the free municipal baths for children at the Tuerkenschantz Park, and beautiful they were, too; and the Hapsburg Palace which had been converted into a chil-

dren's home. But their greatest pride in the New Vienna were the municipal houses. Imagine! Sixty-four thousand city-built dwellings for the plain people! The city fathers had engaged the best architects; the houses were the finest science and art could build; they were for the people, and the rents were so low they were open to those who had lived all their lives in the slums and seen their children die like flies from tuberculosis. Recently one of the city fathers had said in a public speech:

"The New Vienna will continue in the path of progress, to the advantage of its inhabitants, to the honor of socialism."

It was noon and the light of the clear heavens filled the courtyard of my father's house. A group of children were playing near the basin of the fountain and the air was filled with their happy laughter. No wonder the conservatives hated these houses; they were the most modern in the city and they were filled with the most laughter.

In his three-room apartment on the third floor (which housed *The Future*) I found my father at lunch. He was always an early riser and I could see from his desk that he had put in a morning's work. For a man over sixty, he was amazingly energetic. This morning his face was wind-burned and radiant with health. He had become accustomed to take long walks and Swedish exercises; he had given up tobacco and alcohol and watched his diet carefully. He did everything he thought might increase his powers of labor and endurance in a period which made great demands upon him and his friends.

My father embraced me with affection, congratulated me on my birthday, wished me a happy new year and plunged into politics at once. Like all his friends he felt this period had placed a grave responsibility on his shoulders. For these people there were, in a sense, no holidays; and in another sense, every day was a kind of holiday. Now there was no waking hour of their lives, day or night, when they were not thinking about the troubles Here and the triumphs There.

They were more certain than ever they were right. Years ago they had predicted the old economic machine would crack. It was old, rusty and dangerous. Now perhaps people would learn the bitter lessons widespread catastrophe was teaching the world. Perhaps they would have sense enough to scrap the old economic machine and try the new kind, the one that was working so well There. Father and his friends had predicted that success, too. They always said it would work. They weren't surprised, but everybody else was. Here we were supposed to be very civilized and very advanced. There

they were supposed to be barbarians—very backward, very inefficient and thoroughly unsmiling. But they were smiling. There now! They liked to point to our economic index steadily going down, and to their economic index steadily going up, and they smiled. Father and his friends smiled, too. They felt the suffering of the people in our world keenly; they had dedicated their lives long ago to make that suffering impossible; but now they smiled because they knew for certain that the way out was really the way out. Here the thing which had been a lie for fifty years had ceased to work. There the thing which had been a dream for fifty years had begun to work. Even its enemies admitted that much. Nobody could ever again question the basic part of it all. It worked.

I was smiling at Father's notion of celebrating New Year's. He was entertaining me with the latest figures about collective farms. Then he, too, smiled and changed the subject.

"I hate to bother you again, Paul," he said, "but could you put up one of my friends at your place? He's coming in from Berlin on the afternoon train, and will work with me on the paper for a couple of months."

"Who is it this time?"

"Kurt Hertzfeld. You must have seen his name in *The Future*."

"I'm sorry to say I haven't been reading the paper."

"Kurt is a poet," Father said. "I remember you once liked poetry."

"That was a long time ago."

"They did a play of his in Berlin last year: *Steel*."

"I read about it," I said. "What did you say his name was?"

"Kurt Hertzfeld. I think you'll like him."

"Is he coming here first?"

"No, I've got to arrange a meeting for tomorrow night. We want him to talk to us about what they're doing There. He was There last year. Will you meet him at the station for me? I'll appreciate it very much. The train is due in an hour."

"How will I know him?"

"Here is a photo of him," said Father. He pointed to one of the signed photographs on the wall. It showed a clean-cut, athletic young man of about twenty-seven or thereabouts.

"Take a good look at it," Father said. "With your memory, you'll never forget him."

"He doesn't look like a poet."

"What is a poet supposed to look like?"

"I wouldn't be a bit surprised if you had a lot of his work around."

"Would you like to see it?" my father said.

"No, thanks. I feel depressed enough without it," I said.

Father opened a bound volume of *The Future* and pointed to some verses.

"Here's something Kurt sent me from over There last year," he said.

I glanced at the verses. I did not think it was good poetry even in our language. In time, I translated this poem into English, and that hardly improved it. But I must admit that even the first time, that New Year's afternoon in my father's office at Floridsdorf, I was struck by the idea. For me it had become banal, like everything else, but perhaps that was precisely why it touched me at that moment. It seemed like a queer kind of birthday present from my own youth. Anyway, this is what the poem said: The professors say the world is old; yesterday, as time goes, we crawled on our bellies, ate our foes, blood dripped from our speechless mouths: we have groped through a million black eons, blind children of blind chance, the trumpets blow for the advance over the crumbling walls of history: man's true joy, wisdom, power, art; true love of woman, child, friend shall first begin when false things end, when yesterday's monsters are safely dead: we have learned to walk on our hind legs, exchange ideas across the seas; the smokestacks loom above the trees: China beholds the banners of Moscow.

I read it a second time, and threw the magazine on the desk.

"How do you like it?" my father said.

"The poetry is terrible, but I like the idea."

"I thought you would."

"I like the idea except for the last line. That's propaganda."

"To me it's the best part of the poem," said Father.

"How does a poet come to write about an idea like that? I thought that was my province."

"Our poets take the whole world as their province."

"All right," I said. "When do I deliver this precious poet to you?"

"Tomorrow night at eight, in the meeting hall on the first floor of this building. Please explain to Kurt why I couldn't come. And many thanks, Paul."

I waited at the railway station fifteen minutes before the train arrived. The day's gloom was complete. I was accustomed to putting up my father's friends, and it wasn't the bad poetry either. Men have died and worms have eaten them but not for doggerel. It must have been something in my father's voice when he spoke about Kurt Hertzfeld. Father had many friends; he liked most of them and respected some, Hans Bayer most of all, and men like Janos Vekely and Rudolf Immerman. Even those of his circle whom he

most detested or despised he called comrades. The case of Kurt Hertzfeld was different. This was the first time in many years I had heard my father speak of anyone with so much genuine love. It wasn't what he had said; he had hardly said anything about the poet. It was the manner in which he had talked about him. And the young man who had aroused his heart, was now as old as I had been at the time of the Schmerlingplatz affair, long, long ago, when high aspiration still filled my brain and the future appeared integrated and clear because of a luminous promise I had divined in the historic past. What did I resent in this unknown visitor for whom I was waiting? That the love he had roused in my father's heart should have stunned me into a full realization of my egocentric loneliness.

The train rolled into the station and came to a stop. Passengers poured out of the cars, and as the crowd thinned I recognized Kurt Hertzfeld. He had put his heavy traveling bag on the floor of the platform and was looking around the station, then he took a little address book from his pocket and began to turn the pages. I approached him and saw he wore a black fedora hat with a wide brim, a light overcoat with the collar turned up and a flannel shirt. As I introduced myself and explained my presence with the usual polite apologies, he looked at me directly and smiled.

At that moment I wished I were a poet myself so that I could probe and define the strange quality of Kurt Hertzfeld's face, of which the photo I had seen had been only a crude, lifeless image, and the strange effect which that direct, smiling look of his had upon me from the first. It was like a burst of sunlight after a morning of rain, like an electric current that shocks all your senses awake, like a confidence that you whisper in the ear of your dearest friend. His face was difficult to describe and not easy to forget. I haven't forgotten it yet and I don't think I ever shall. It was young, fair, clean, extremely alive, and the blue eyes were at once very keen and very kind. The features were delicate, almost beautiful, like the portraits of certain romantic poets in the early nineteenth century; but there was nothing sensual or weak about them; they were suffused with the strength of faces you saw on the farms of the Tyrol, or among the workers in Floridsdorf, or in the crowd long ago on the Schmerlingplatz. Most remarkable of all, the wide, lucid blue eyes had ardor without fanaticism, an extraordinary quality of living that rejoiced to see others alive. And I resented Kurt Hertzfeld all the more, as I had earlier that day resented the happy church bells of Vienna and the café wits and even my father because they all seemed to glory in life during times so catastrophic and so hopeless.

"You are very kind to call for me," Kurt was saying, and his

voice was warm, clear, soft and strong. "May I wish you a very happy New Year, Professor Schuman?"

"Thank you and the same to you. Do you mind staying at my place? Many of my father's friends do that. I think you'll find it comfortable."

"You are very, very kind," he said again, and he spoke as if he had known me for years, as if we had been friends from the day he was born. "Do you know, professor, I had hoped it would happen this way. Immerman told me a great deal about you, and I've read your book on Condorcet. I didn't entirely agree with it, but I liked it, and I've been looking forward to meeting you someday."

I was embarrassed. To anybody else I would have lied: I would have said I had heard a great deal about him, too, and how much I admired his writings and how often I read them with pleasure. But for some unaccountable reason you could not lie to this man.

"May I take your bag?" I said.

"No, no, thank you very much. I don't want to trouble you. If I am going to stay with you, you must let me take care of myself."

He laughed shyly, lifted his heavy traveling bag from the floor of the platform and we started for the street. We took a taxi and on the way to my apartment Kurt talked simply and pleasantly about the most commonplace things—how lovely Vienna was, what bright skies we were having, how much he liked the landscape en route from the border, did I enjoy my work at the university, was I married, did I have children, how was my father whom everybody admires so much, did I pay a lot of rent for my rooms, how were living costs these days. He talked about these things rather naïvely, yet somehow he made them appear very important, as if everything in the world was important, as if life were so wonderful and sacred that every aspect of it ought to fill our hearts with boundless joy. By the time we reached my rooms, I was inexplicably glad it was New Year's Day, glad to be alive and even glad I had reached my thirty-third year. And I was completely convinced that Kurt Hertzfeld was a good-natured simpleton.

6

*Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation
rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking
her invincible locks: methinks I see her as an eagle mewing
her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the
full midday beam.*

—*Arcopagitica*

I CHANGED MY mind within twenty-four hours. It began at the meeting which Kurt addressed the following night at Floridsdorf. The hall was crowded with the old familiar faces, but there were many new ones, too. Some of these people had been driven in this direction by the continued catastrophe in the west and the reported progress in the east. The unexpected reversal of the economic graphs seemed to supply them with an answer for which they had been searching. Others came because Kurt was a well-known poet and playwright. They were café wits and writers who wanted to hear him speak on literature Here and There. Among them was a sprinkling of journalists who intended to write about the poet's visit to our city.

The meeting opened in the usual way. My father took the chair, rapped his gavel on the speaker's stand, and, like so many chairmen, talked longer than was necessary about the events of the week. Then he read announcements, which he took out of his bulging brief case, of coming dances, balls, meetings, conferences, raffles and subscription drives. Finally he introduced Kurt and the poet began his lecture on literature.

Needless to say, he did not start out with literature at all. He began to recount the Great Saga as I had heard it recounted a thousand times before, and even the phrases were the same. Haven't you heard that saga yourself many times, doctor? Kurt began to tell it quietly, almost in a matter-of-fact way. Tightly he gripped the sides of the speaker's stand, loaded with several books, a mass of note paper and the traditional pitcher of water. He looked around the crowded meeting hall and began to speak slowly. Obviously he felt awkward, as if he wanted to convey an apology for venturing into

this field; yet he made one feel that the story had to be told because it deeply concerned everybody in the world. Soon his face became lit with an inner fire, and he was telling the story without self-consciousness:

In the beginning the peoples of the empire lived in great darkness, poverty and oppression. The despots robbed them of bread, knowledge and freedom, and taught them to hate each other. But for years there burned in the hearts of the people the dream of a free world. The Great War came. It blasted their lives, leaving them hungry, disillusioned, weary and desperate. And now the millions, from one end of the empire to the other, rose with boundless fury against the ancient wrongs which for centuries had enslaved them. They shattered the chains which had bound them so long, drove the tyrants from their thrones and countinghouses and declared themselves masters of their own destiny. And now, led by the party, the vanguard of the millions, the peoples of the land set about to give body to their dream of true liberty.

Kurt spoke quietly, and the audience listened in profound silence. They were never tired of hearing that saga, and they were glad to hear again the latest aspect of their vision come true. But there was something else in the way they leaned forward in their seats and listened to the young poet. Though he said the old things in the old way, there was in his face and voice and whole bearing an intense love for the thing he was describing, and it was this love which made the audience listen as if these things were being said for the first time. Kurt stood before them on the platform, slim in his dark-blue suit and gray flannel shirt and red tie; and his glossy golden hair lay long and heavy on his uplifted head; and his fair face and keen blue eyes were alight with fire; and the people felt he was saying things the most dear to his heart which he knew to be true wholly apart from himself.

Now Kurt told how the peoples of that distant land ceased to hate each other. They called each other equals and no race was despised or hounded, but all races were equal in the sight of the law and in the hearts of men. With a tremendous surge of liberated energy, the peoples threw down the medieval walls which had imprisoned them and emerged into the vast light of our century. They were masters of the land, free to build it according to their heart's desire, and they created the first socialist republic in history. And now came miraculous changes. They were all the more miraculous because men had deliberately planned them with foresight and determination, and because the peoples transformed the land in the face of the greatest obstacles and dangers. Science leaped to the aid of the people, and the machine was made to work swiftly and relent-

lessly. Men and machines labored endlessly to change the face of the land, to create those great basic things which alone can make possible a great high life later. The bowels of the earth were compelled to disgorge their vast secret treasures; new factories rose in the fields and new cities spread across horizons once bare and isolated. The peasants tilled the earth in enormous areas; they sowed together and they reaped the fruits of the earth together, and the machine labored for them and greatly increased the riches of the earth.

The audience applauded not the speaker but the things of which he spoke. Kurt lifted the pitcher of water on the stand, poured some into a glass and drank slowly until the applause died down. Then he pictured the strong, enthusiastic workers. There, their nationwide all-embracing unions, the things they were swiftly building, day in and day out, according to plan and without respite, working ever more swiftly and effectively to enrich their common heritage and common life, working relentlessly against time and obstacles for the needs of the moment and the needs of the future. Vividly he described to us cities, villages, factories and collective farms he had visited, far-off races fresh from the taigas of prehistory with whom he had talked socialism, new railways on which he had traveled, new ships which had carried him across new waterways under tropic skies and through frigid winds of the ultimate north, new airways which had flown him to distant republics, new roads he had traversed by car, all of it new, all of it part of the miracle which men had achieved in a few years because they had a common faith and owned things in common and labored together fraternally for a common goal. And though he was from another land and spoke another tongue he felt this new life belonged to him because it belonged to all the plain people of the world.

Hands clapped thunderously and a few voices at the back of the meeting hall cried, "Bravo! Bravo!"—and Kurt wiped his brow with a handkerchief and knew this was for the land he was describing and for the things they all loved together. Now he leaned against the speaker's stand, glanced through his notes and began to cite figures; and his voice made even the dulllest figures seem vibrant with life. He used harsh words like *organization* and *collective* and *productivity*; he cited authorities from memory; he read marked passages from books and newspaper clippings, which he fished continually from his pockets; and somehow it all seemed very much alive and very important to everybody in the world.

My father sat in a large armchair at the rear of the platform and I could see his face beaming with unconcealed pleasure. The windows of the hall were closed; the room was becoming stuffy;

everybody smoked too much. I stood in the rear of the meeting place, near the door, and listened to Kurt with some reservations.

Now he launched into the second canto of his epic. In the same quiet voice he told how through all the years of struggle and tension, storm, difficulty, opposition and danger, the new regime had never for a single moment neglected the minds and hearts of the men, women and children of the land. From the beginning, they had set out to transform the people of darkness into a people of light. They opened the eyes of those who had been rendered blind for centuries, and showed them the glories of the world's knowledge, thought and art. Women of sixty were learning to read primers and youths of twenty the literary treasures of all the nations of the earth. Books and newspapers flowed from the presses, the movie projectors ground out their marvelous images in every village; radios filled the clubrooms with music; schoolhouses sprang up in every part of the land. And the new teachers, writers, poets, painters and actors all joined with the vanguard of the people to give millions an understanding and love of socialism; to fill their minds and hearts with enthusiasm for building the new existence; to replace the old, egotistical individualism with a social, collective attitude toward the world, toward all life, toward their fellow men, toward themselves; to create in everyone the co-operative spirit which was imperative for that society in which the golden rule shall be: from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs.

As Kurt spoke, individual faces stood out in the room, and soon I thought I knew every person there. The poet himself seemed to be looking directly at me as he spoke, as if he were talking to me personally; but later I found that many other people in that audience had the same impression; they had felt that Kurt was addressing them individually, intimately. At the same time his words and the way he uttered them welded us all into a harmonious unit.

To this I must note one exception, and since it was Ludwig Hauck who later created the disturbance which led to the unexpected sensation of the evening, I'll tell you a little about him. Hauck was a type which America is absolutely incapable of producing. I doubt whether he could have developed anywhere except in the cafés of Vienna's twilight. He was a short man with broad shoulders and large round head, partly bald. Heavy eyebrows hung over his shifting black eyes and fleshy nose. Hauck had originally started out as a wit in the Café Central on the Herrengasse. He earned his living by doing odd pieces for newspapers and magazines. Once, shortly after the war, some paper accidently sent him over There as a cor-

respondent. At that time it was considered a poor assignment and the post gave Hauck no special standing in our community. For years he was apologetic about the post and contemptuous about the utopia he had been sent to describe. Later, when the first socialist republic was recognized as a power in the world, he began to bask in its reflected glory.

Hauck did not belong to any of the organizations in which my father was interested. He despised them for their poverty and "fanatical ignorance," and insisted they were positively harmful abroad to the Socialist Fatherland. This concerned Hauck very much. He was by this time widely accepted as an expert on foreign affairs. Responsible people who wanted information or an opinion about what they were doing or thinking There always went to Hauck. Had he not visited the mysterious capital every year? Had he not interviewed the most inaccessible men in the Kremlin? Did he not hobnob every day of his life and in all the leading capitals of Europe with elder statesmen, foreign ministers, cabinet members, and field marshals—not to mention opera singers and film stars? Here was no mere radical with an ax to grind and no influence in exalted circles. Hauck was an impartial observer on whom you could always rely for the "real truth." Hauck's reputation for truth was based on the simple device of telling the exalted circles of Europe what they wanted to hear. He knew just when to blow hot and when to blow cold, and his sense of timing was perfect. When responsible people in Vienna were enthusiastic about policies over There, Hauck posed as a kind of semiofficial spokesman who could deliver inside information. And when the tide of opinion ran against the policies There, Hauck became the severest critic of that country, albeit still its best friend. As a rule, nobody questioned his right to play this self-appointed role, and nobody remembered that ninety per cent of his pompous prophecies turned out to be a hundred per cent wrong. My father and his friends disliked Hauck intensely, of course; they called him a "caviar bolshevik" and resented both his fake piety and his presumptuous criticism.

This evening Hauck stood among the café wits lining the right wall of the meeting place, and throughout Kurt's lecture glowered unsmiling both at the enthusiastic speaker and at the no less enthusiastic audience. His small, sensual mouth, pursed as if sucking a perennial lemon (that comes from licking the boots of exalted personages, my father used to say), seemed to rebuke these people for daring to concern themselves with matters which were his professional province.

Obviously this was going to be a long meeting. I found a seat, lit my pipe and sat back to endure the rest of Kurt's lecture. I had

promised the poet not only to attend the meeting but to go with him afterward to a café.

I say *endure* advisedly, for now Kurt launched into the main body of his speech, the state of literature Here and There. It was the same old contrast of the downward and upward curves, of regression and progress, except that now it applied to the realm spiritual instead of the realm temporal. And how curiously Kurt changed! Gone was the awkwardness with which he had touched on economic and political matters in which he did not feel at home. He now became extremely animated, even passionate; the phrases flowed more evenly. For the first time he allowed himself—and us—some humor; and what he said was not to my liking. Once, anxious to prove that Maxim Gorky agreed with him or vice versa, he even crossed the platform to where his overcoat lay across a chair and kept the audience waiting several minutes while he located a magazine clipping in one of his pockets. And I'll admit that much of what he said was not without interest. What infuriated me—and I suppose you won't spare me the reason for it, doctor—was his attack on the philistinism of the West.

Kurt began by saying that the main theme of nineteenth century literature was the individual personality. Our writers had for a century opposed the isolated ego to society, nature and the state. They were compelled to do this because the development of society Here had oppressed the personality. The governing class had consistently and ruthlessly violated the very ideals in the name of which it had seized power under the aegis of liberty, equality, fraternity.

So far so good. But now Kurt rushed to the assault and I began to squirm in my seat. He said the writers who had criticized Western society had uttered many truths. But they had refused to face their own responsibility for the prevailing state of affairs. They recognized that the prevailing social order had become trivial, base and criminal. But did they grasp the real causes of this development? Did they understand and denounce the frightful *principles* upon which our society was based? No! In most cases the writers had criticized the surrounding world only because it had rendered their own lives hopeless. They wanted to take revenge for the humiliations it had heaped upon them. To be sure, there were some writers who in despair turned to the working people. But did they do so in the interests of the masses? Not at all! They wanted something perfectly selfish. They hoped that by destroying the old social order the masses would guarantee the isolated privileged personality freedom of thought and liberty of action. All this, according to Kurt, explained the main theme of our literature in the past fifty years. That theme was the inevitable tragedy of the ego for whom life had

become hopeless. The so-called hero feels superfluous in society because he has tried to find a comfortable place in it and failed. He is a penitent nobleman; a creature who is neither fish, flesh nor fowl. In the end this pitiful hero of modern Western tragedy suffers and dies; or he becomes reconciled with the society which has tried to destroy him by its hostility; or he seeks nirvana in alcohol and eroticism; or he shoots himself.

There, of course, it is all different. They have no superfluous people. There, no penitent noblemen, no ambiguous creatures. There everyone enjoys the fullest freedom for the development of his gifts, and only one demand is made upon the personality: be honest in your attitude toward the heroic work of creating a classless society.

By this time some people in the audience were coughing, and there was a restless movement in various parts of the hall. The workers and radicals continued to pay the strictest attention to what Kurt said, but among the café wits one felt resentment. There was some audible whispering, and my father rose from his chair and looked around the hall. He strode across the platform and banged with his gavel repeatedly on the speaker's stand until absolute quiet was restored and Kurt was able to go on.

And he did go on relentlessly to attack the intellectual philistines of the West who fatten on the labor of the people, gravitate to the paws of the governing classes and are forced to the side of the poor and the oppressed only by the most catastrophic economic debacle. And when circumstances did drive them to the workers' movement, they usually brought with them their old anarchism and egocentrism and—here Kurt quoted from one of his numerous clippings—"all the banality which is the historical concomitant of the philistine, that banality of thought which feeds exclusively on routine facts and not on the inspiration of labor."

Philistinism, Kurt exclaimed in a sharp, clear voice that rang throughout the meeting place, propagates the philosophy of individual growth along the lines of least resistance, and seeks an impossible equilibrium between the two, great irreconcilable forces of modern society. Over There, of course, they were getting rid as rapidly as possible of all remnants of philistinism. The new society asserted that life is creative action. They did everything possible There to facilitate the uninterrupted development of the priceless individual faculties of man. There man was fighting for complete victory over the forces of nature, for the sake of his health and prolongation of life, for the supreme joy of living upon an earth which he wants to mold into a beautiful dwelling place for mankind, united into a single family!

Kurt spoke this peroration with such striking fervor, convic-

tion and power that the audience spontaneously rose to its feet cheering. The young poet sipped some water, passed his handkerchief across his brow, now drenched in perspiration, and sat down modestly in a corner of the platform. My father banged his gavel on the stand, restored quiet and made the customary collection speech; and as always it was impressive to see people donate pennies they could ill afford to spare for a dream they were not likely to see realized in their own lifetime. Afterward Father called for questions. These came from every part of the room, and involved all sorts of political, economic and literary problems Here and There.

Across the room I could see Ludwig Hauck standing among the café wits, shifting from one foot to the other, obviously ill at ease. Suddenly, just when the question period had reached the inevitable lull, Hauck shot his hand into the air and my father gave him the floor. The broad-shouldered expert cleared his throat, glowered at Kurt and said in a low voice charged with theatrical gravity:

"I'd like to ask the speaker whether he thinks there will be a world war in our generation, and in that case what will the Socialist Fatherland do about it."

A great hush fell over the audience. It was clear that what Hauck had just said was not a question but a challenge. Kurt smiled directly at the journalist, that quiet friendly smile of his, and said:

"No doubt there will be another world war in our generation. And no doubt the Socialist Fatherland will be thoroughly prepared for it."

Again tense silence filled the room. Hauck let out a raucous laugh which announced both his contempt for the naïveté of the speaker and his determination to correct the poet's errors.

"I expected you to say just that," said Hauck, moving closer to the platform and turning to the audience. My father frowned. "All you people suffer from a kind of political paranoia!" The insult stung the audience and murmurs of protest filled the hall. "You think everybody wants to persecute you, that the whole world is planning to invade and subjugate the Socialist Fatherland, that nobody wants peace except you!" Shouts of protest began to rise all over the room, but at first it was impossible to make out the words. "But what about the conferences?" Hauck persisted. "What about the treaties? Aren't the great powers doing everything they can do to prevent another war?"

Now people leaped to their feet, one after the other, men and women, schoolboys and schoolgirls, workers and professionals, and hurled replies at Ludwig Hauck.

"The conferences break up!"

"They are not sincere!"

"The treaties are scraps of paper!"

"They are fakes to begin with!"

Hauck grinned and waited for the tumult to subside.

"I assure you, ladies and gentlemen," he shouted, "you are doing the Socialist Fatherland no good with your misguided enthusiasm!"

"Throw him out!" several voices shouted.

"Who asked you to come here?"

My father began to bang his gavel but the crowd was too furious to pay attention. They kept shouting at Hauck from every part of the hall:

"Sit down and shut up!"

"Bootlicker!"

"Why don't you mind your own business!"

"This is his business!"

"And a damned lucrative one!"

"Throw him out!"

Kurt walked slowly to the speaker's stand and raised his hand and silence fell over the hall.

"Please," he said to the audience, smiling, "let the gentleman speak. We ought to welcome questions of every kind. If there is a mistake, it is our duty to correct it. That is how truth spreads." There was a light patter of applause among the literati, and Kurt turned to Hauck. "And now, my good friend," he said, "is it your opinion there will be no war?"

Hauck seemed to be rather taken aback. When he spoke there was an unaccustomed note of respect in his voice. He retreated a few steps and faced the platform, as if he had resigned himself to being part of the audience.

"Let me explain," he said to Kurt. "In the past year I have interviewed a number of leading statesmen and diplomats in London, Paris, Berlin and Geneva, and it is my earnest conviction that war will be prevented. That ought to please you and your friends very much. For you ought to know—as I know from countless visits There—that the Socialist Fatherland will not be prepared for a major war. They will not have the industry, the army, the food, the necessary equipment, the transportation or the national unity required for a major effort. If by some dark and terrible turn of events war should come, it would be the most frightful calamity for the people over There. Their armed forces would collapse within three weeks, their land would be overrun and subjugated by the enemy, and their new society would be wiped out. That is all I meant to say."

Kurt stood for a moment in silence, then said quietly:

"War is a calamity for the peoples of the world under any cir-

cumstances, though sometimes they have to fight it for a great and righteous cause. The people There want peace. They are trying hard to persuade the rulers of other lands to maintain it. They will continue to try to the very last moment. The peoples of the whole world want peace. But there are forces which do not want it. These may precipitate a war. In that case, I assure you, the Socialist Fatherland will be fully prepared to defend itself."

A thunder of applause shook the hall. Hauck passed his hand over his bald head, and his lips moved with suppressed rage but no sound came. Then the applause died down and he turned to Kurt shouting:

"You are talking nonsense!"

Again the crowd called for Hauck to sit down, but Kurt restored quiet and said to the journalist:

"I am not an expert on foreign affairs, like yourself, sir. But I'd like to tell you how I came to the conclusion you insist upon disputing. May I read you one of my clippings?"

The audience roared with laughter and the tension which Hauck had created was gone. Kurt fished out a clipping from one of his pockets, glanced through it rapidly to make sure it was the right one and said:

"I have here the newspaper report of a speech delivered two years ago by the most authoritative voice There. The speaker was the man whom the people love above all their leaders. He is preparing the land with the utmost speed for any possible emergency. Listen to what he said."

And Kurt began to read the clipping. I must admit, doctor, that as he cited that speech, I could not help being skeptical, and in those days my reaction was not unique. In that speech the leader whom Kurt was citing told his people why it was impossible to reduce the swift, relentless speed of economic advance upon which the country was launched. To slacken that speed, he said, meant to fall behind, and the backward are always beaten: we do not want to be beaten: no, we do not want this! The history of our country in the old days, he said, was the history of defeats due to backwardness. She had been beaten in the course of time by Mongol khans, Turkish beys, Swedish feudal barons, Polish-Lithuanian squires, Anglo-French capitalists, Japanese barons. They all beat her because of her backwardness: all kinds of backwardness: military, cultural, governmental, agricultural, industrial. Yes, the country had been beaten again and again because to beat her was profitable and could be done with impunity. That is why we must no longer be backward! Do you want our Socialist Fatherland to be beaten and to lose its independence? If you do not want this, you must put an end to this backwardness as speedily as possible; you must develop the socialist

system of economy with the greatest possible speed. There is no other way!

Again applause rocked the room. Kurt halted for a moment and looked around calmly. The audience leaned forward in attentive silence. The meeting had taken on a new lease of life and was moving on a high, intense plane, as if the people felt they were face to face with the gigantic shape of things to come. Then the young poet turned to his clipping and read the conclusion, the part where the leader had said: We are fifty to a hundred years behind the advanced countries. We must cover this distance in *ten years*! Either we do this or they will crush us!

In the profound silence which followed, my father rose from his chair in the rear of the platform and surveyed the audience to make sure there would be no disturbance. Hauck had retreated to the wall and had taken his original place among the café wits. Now Kurt turned to him and said gravely:

"The lines I have just read emphasize a truth which it is our business to face."

"I still say it's all nonsense!" Hauck snapped. "It's persecution mania in a crass political form."

"Very well," said Kurt, looking at Hauck intently with his keen blue eyes. "We have a thousand witnesses here, and in their presence I'm going to make you a little bet of fifty schillings."

People in the audience stood up here and there to see what was transpiring on the platform. Hauck's face became gray and impassive. Kurt took some paper money out of his pocket and handed it to my father.

"Our chairman here," said Kurt, "can hold the stakes. If I win, the money will go to *The Future*."

"What's the bet?" Hauck asked suspiciously.

The audience began to laugh. People turned to each other in good humor, and those in front began to pass to the rear rows the details of the little drama on the platform.

"My bet is this," said Kurt. "The speech I just read to you said that to escape being crushed by its enemies, the Socialist Fatherland must catch up with the advanced countries economically within *ten years*. That speech was delivered early in 1931. I am betting you that if the great test comes ten years later, if the Socialist Fatherland is compelled to face a major war sometime in the year 1941, it will be fully prepared to fight it to a victorious conclusion."

People began to clap, laugh, cheer, stamp and whistle all over the hall. There was an air of holiday excitement in everyone's face. Even I found myself laughing at Kurt's fantastic confidence in the thing he loved above all things in the world, and at his queer gesture

in backing up the promptings of his "intuition" by a public wager. I joined in the general noise and from my seat shouted up to the poet:

"Save your money, Kurt! Don't be extravagant!"

Kurt himself was laughing as he turned to me.

"I can afford to be extravagant," he said. "I am poor."

The audience laughed uproariously at that for some reason, and my father banged his gavel until order was restored.

"What is your answer, Herr Hauck?" my father said.

The meeting was becoming positively weird. Hauck rapidly walked up to the platform and stood beside the speaker's table, facing the audience. There were a few hisses and boos but the gavel stopped those and Hauck was allowed to proceed. He slapped down several bank notes on the stand and shouted to Kurt:

"The bet is on! My reply to your crazy prophecy is—never!"

Father put the money into his bulging brief case, but left it open. Hauck started to leave the platform, but Kurt stopped him for a moment, saying:

"I have an old motto, Herr Hauck, which is good for all sorts of situations. I am happy for this chance to pass it on to you. *Never say never!*"

The audience laughed again, and people began to rise, assuming that with this climax the meeting was over. They were mistaken. One more crazy sensation was in store for us. Now my father rapped for order and said:

"It is natural, my friends, that in troubled times like these even a poet must grapple with the great fundamental issues which confront us. But after all, Kurt Hertzfeld is a poet! I can think of no more fitting way to close this meeting than to have him read us some of his verses."

Kurt seemed embarrassed, but the crowd began to shout, "Bravo! Bravo!" and finally he nodded his head in acquiescence. Everyone sat down quietly, and a new mood filled the hall. The audience sensed that art required a different mood than politics. For a moment I had the strange notion that I was in a church, that the sermon had been completed, the choir about to render a hymn hallowed by centuries of time. My father opened his bulging brief case, drew out a bound volume of *The Future* and opened it.

"Here," said my father, addressing the audience with a smile, "is one of Kurt Hertzfeld's longer poems, one of his best. I have always wanted to hear him read it. I hope he will do me the favor now, and I hope you will all share my pleasure in this unusual privilege."

He laid the volume down on the mass of books, notes and clip-

pings next to the water pitcher on the speaker's stand against which Kurt was leaning. The poet looked down on the open pages and a cryptic look came over his face. Then something wholly unexpected happened. He reached for the water pitcher, as if to take a drink before reading, and I could have sworn his gesture was deliberately awkward. The pitcher keeled over; the water flooded the books and papers on the stand. Kurt lunged forward as if to save the pitcher, and sent the whole stand crashing to the floor. The pitcher exploded with a dull crack; books and papers scattered along the platform. A nervous laugh rippled through the audience. My father picked up with an unhappy look on his face the bound volume of *The Future*, soaked with water and utterly useless for anything except the garbage can. It was a strange accident and everyone sensed there was something behind it.

Kurt, flushing a deep red, faced the audience and apologized for the awkward accident in a low voice. The long poem which my father had suggested was now, alas, illegible; but after all, it had already appeared in print and was old hat. However, he would be glad to make up for his stupid blunder by reciting an unpublished sonnet.

The audience was obviously disappointed; but the moment Kurt uttered the first line of his sonnet, tension vanished. Later, when I saw the poem in print, I felt as I did about most of Kurt's verse. It was always better for the ear than for the eye, as if the words were only part of the poem, the rest of it remaining within the poet himself and reaching the audience only through the medium of his personality. That was really it: he was more of a poetic personality than a poet on paper. Yet now, as he spoke his lines, there came through the banal phrases and time-worn similes a genuine emotion which penetrated for a moment even the rapidly rusting armor of my skepticism: The hordes that battle for the world's domain sweat impatiently within each camp: once more the blood-soaked earth roars with the tramp of armies thundering across the plain: and now again the long eternal rain shall drum in darkness taps upon the damp cracked bodies; and the yellow lonely lamp of night glow on the entrails of the slain: and we who once awoke from the slow dream of peace and childhood to behold the sky broken asunder by the flaming steel of shells whose death came with a monstrous scream, shall this time, having lived, know how to die rifle in hand to make a just dream real.

The meeting ended on a high note. My father announced the sum of the collection and the audience sang the song of the international movement with great spirit and everybody went home. Kurt and I followed my father to his rooms. The moment we got there, the poet came to the point at once.

"Forgive me, Schuman," he said to my father, "but I could not very well explain to the audience that I did not *want* to read that long poem which you published three years ago."

"So you deliberately knocked that pitcher over," said my father.

"Yes. I owe you a thousand apologies," Kurt said.

"You ruined a bound volume of *The Future*," my father said. He was trying not to appear angry.

"I'm very sorry," said Kurt. "And I'm going to ask you for a great favor. You must take a good, sharp razor and cut that old poem out of every copy of the magazine you can lay your hands on."

"What are you talking about!" my father said in exasperation. Then, as if it proved something: "It's five pages long!"

"I am suppressing that poem," said Kurt with quiet determination. "It must disappear thoroughly from print."

"But, man alive!" my father pleaded. "What's wrong with it? It's one of the best you've ever done. Everybody likes it. We received hundreds of enthusiastic fan letters. And the line was absolutely correct."

"I'm glad you used the past tense," said Kurt. "The line was correct when I wrote the poem. That was three years ago. But shortly before I came here, Hans Bayer pointed out to me in Berlin that the line has changed. What was true and useful then is untrue and harmful now. He suggested I stop the circulation of that poem as far as possible until other times have rendered it useful again."

My father seemed to be greatly impressed.

"Did Hans Bayer say that?" he asked. "I must be getting old. I didn't notice anything wrong in that poem from the viewpoint of our present line. Otherwise I should not have suggested your reading it. But, of course, if Hans Bayer . . ."

All this, I thought, is none of my business, so I said to Kurt:

"Would you mind enlightening a mere philistine?"

"I hope you didn't take my lecture personally," he said.

"Do I understand matters correctly? You write a long poem. You put a lot of heart and time into it. They like it. They publish it. They approve it. They praise it. Then, three years later, the line changes. You are asked to suppress your own work. And you *gladly acquiesce!* Is that right?"

"You have stated the facts correctly," said Kurt, smiling. "But from the ironic note in your voice I see you do not really understand them. Hans Bayer's request was not directed at me or at my poem. Hans is an utterly selfless, devoted comrade who lives for nothing but the cause, and he also happens to be my best friend. When he made that request, it was solely for the good of the cause. I consider the sacrifice trivial compared to those which others make."

"What's trivial about it?" I said. "It's your work."

"It's only a matter of words," he said. "Others give their lives."

"People have murdered each other for words and the meaning of words."

"Only when the words stood for important things."

"Don't yours?"

"Nothing anybody writes can be as important as the great thing itself—the cause."

I felt sorry for Kurt. He did not believe in himself, his personality, or his work.

"All right," I said. "Do you still want to see Vienna night life?"

"Certainly," he said, smiling.

That smile infuriated me now. Nothing made him angry. Nobody had a right to be that much at home in the world.

7

*The olive grove of Academe,
Plato's retirement, where the Attic bird
Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long.
—Paradise Regained.*

WE DID NOT stay at the café long, yet in that brief hour Kurt made many friends. People who had attended the lecture at Floridsdorf came to our table anxious to talk with the poet. Some drank wine or beer, others coffee, and above the murmur of voices in various parts of the large room, through the floating gray-blue tobacco smoke, the fragrance of cooked dishes, the click of chess pieces, Kurt listened and replied and gave of his spirit generously to all.

After a while Ludwig Hauck entered the café. He glanced sullenly at our party, heard the clink of glasses and the rolling laughter, and slumped down alone at a distant corner table. But Kurt went up to him, put his hand on the journalist's shoulder and said kindly: "We can disagree and still be friends, can't we?"

Hauck managed a relieved, embarrassed grin and came to our table, and before long joined us in singing the *Gaudeamus Igitur*. To nobody's surprise Kurt turned out to have an excellent baritone, and at our urgent request sang us songs from Heine, and one song from over There, the one which tells how enemies attempted to destroy the new way of life There and how the Red Army, from the taiga to the sea, swept them out of the land.

We left at one o'clock. Kurt and I started to walk toward my place through the crisp winter night. I was still in a dark mood and still wanted to quarrel with him.

"That was a nice fairy tale you told at Floridsdorf tonight," I said.

Our heels clicked a loud refrain along the nearly isolated streets past the dim lampposts.

"I told them the essence of the truth," Kurt replied.

"What about the rest of it—the mistakes, the injustices, the cruelties?"

"A lot of people are only too glad to tell them that and nothing else. My business is to redress the balance, to tell the essence."

"You made it all too simple. You omitted too much. What about the law that man, born a beast, makes progress as a beast?"

"It's all a matter of proportion," Kurt said, smiling. "I read a medical book once on Beethoven's deafness. It was a fine technical monograph. But the author was a scientist; he did not pretend that deafness was the most important thing about Beethoven. I want to remind people of the essential thing—the great symphonies which transcend and outlive the deafness."

We reached my apartment house and I opened the heavy oak doors, wide awake now as if I were starting a new day. Going up the stairs I heard Kurt behind me saying:

"The remarkable thing is not that so much has gone wrong, but that so much has gone right. Those people started from chaos, ignorance and hate; and they have created so much light that for a long time the world could not believe its eyes. Isn't that a miracle? Isn't it something to lift our hearts and give us boundless faith in man's future?"

I felt as if I had heard that before somewhere. This man was obdurate. We entered my rooms. I turned on the lights and made coffee.

"Are you sleepy, Kurt?" I said. "Maybe we ought to say good night and call it a day. There's been an awful lot of talk tonight."

"No, no," he said. "With friends I like to talk till dawn."

"That's good. I have a few questions. Everybody wants something out of life. What do you want?"

Kurt sat down on the couch, lit a cigarette and puffed it thoughtfully. I stood near the window looking into the lonely streets of night.

"I want more than anything else," Kurt said, "that our great dream of a free humanity should come true."

"I mean what do you want for yourself—personally."

"For myself? That this dream should come true in my lifetime."

"You are lying—either to me or to yourself," I said.

"No; that's how it really is."

"Everybody wants something for himself."

"I've searched my heart thoroughly and this is the truth. My deepest personal wishes are all bound up with the cause at its fullest and highest. The cause is my whole life. I have no life outside it and don't want any."

"Haven't you any literary ambitions? Isn't that what you want for yourself?"

"Of course! But they, too, are part of the greater thing. I can't

write outside it. Unfortunately I'll never be able to write as well as I'd like to."

"If you were a great writer," I said, "Hans Bayer would not have dared to suppress your poem. They respect success, just like other people, even unmerited success."

"You are confusing success with greatness," Kurt said. "Take my word for it, if I had been Goethe, it would have been just the same with Hans Bayer."

"All the worse for you people," I said. "How could you permit Hans Bayer to censor your poetry?"

"Censorship is the wrong word," Kurt insisted. "Hans was only following the rule laid down by Plato for the ideal republic. I can't remember the exact phrases, but it's toward the end of the dialogue."

I leaned forward in my armchair, pulled a copy of *The Republic* out of the bookcase and turned the pages rapidly.

"Here it is," I said, and started to read the passage where Socrates explains what the magistrates of the ideal republic will do with the tragic poets: "Best of friends, we will say to them, we also according to our ability are tragic poets, and our tragedy is the best and noblest; for our whole state is an imitation of the best and noblest life, which we affirm to be indeed the very truth of tragedy. You are poets and we are poets, both makers of the same strains, rivals and antagonists in the noblest of dramas, which true law can alone perfect, as our hope is."

Kurt rose and began pacing up and down the study. He kept passing his hand through his heavy golden hair, and seemed to be in a state of spiritual excitement.

"Don't you like that idea?" he said to me. "I mean that the great statesman is also a creative artist, a poet."

I went on reading the passage from Plato: "Do not then suppose that we shall all in a moment allow you to erect your stage in the agora, or introduce the fair voices of your actors, speaking above our own, and permit you to harangue our women and children, and the common people, about our institutions, in language other than our own, and very often the opposite of our own."

"I had forgotten all that!" Kurt cried enthusiastically. "See how wise the broad-shouldered thinker of Athens was. He knows the voice of poetry may speak above the voice of politics; therein lies its danger. Then he fears the poets may agitate the people about the institutions of the republic, and this agitation may be along lines contrary to the policies of the state. Don't you see what it means, Paul?"

"Don't you want to hear the rest of the passage?" I said.

"Certainly!"

"Here it is: For a state would be mad which gave you this license, until the magistrates had determined whether your poetry might be recited, and was fit for publication or not. Wherefore, O ye sons and scions of the softer Muses, first of all show your songs to the magistrates, and let them compare them with our own, and if they are the same or better, we will give you a chorus; but if not, then, my friends, we cannot."

I closed *The Republic* and laid it on the floor.

"Is that all?" said Kurt.

"That's all."

"Then Plato has been maligned! I was brought up to believe he excluded the poets from his ideal state. Now it turns out he only censored them."

"Only."

"What's wrong with that if the state is ideal?"

"If."

Kurt sat down on the couch again and lit another cigarette.

"Look," he said. "Plato wants the poet to be responsible to the community. He wants to make sure the poet's ideas will be at least as good as the ideas of the community. What's wrong with that?"

"I haven't wanted to live in Plato's republic for some time now," I said. "For ancient society that ideal city was a pleasant dream. For us who live in other times with more realistic possibilities, I prefer other dreams."

"What dreams?"

"When I heard you speak tonight, I was for a moment affected by your aspirations. Then you yourself dramatically called my attention to at least one fly in the ointment."

"You mean because I accepted Hans' suggestion to suppress my own poem?"

"It shows how antiquated you people are in many ways," I said. "You haven't even caught up with John Milton. Three centuries ago he spoke up for a kind of freedom inconceivable to a Greek philosopher whose ideal republic had to be based on slavery."

"The *Areopagitica*," Kurt said, smiling.

"Our coffee is stone cold," I said. "I'll heat some fresh coffee."

"No, no, please," Kurt said. "What about Milton?"

I took Milton's prose out of the bookcase.

"Listen to this," I said. "Books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a progeny of life in them to be as active as that soul whose progeny they are; nay, they do preserve as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them; I know they are as lively, and as vigorously productive, as those fabulous dragon's teeth, and being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men."

"See, Milton admits books may be dangerous," said Kurt.

"He does," I said. "But he sees beyond that obvious point. Listen to the rest of it: Unless wariness be used, as good almost kill a man as kill a good book: who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself, kills the image of God, as it were, in the eye; many a man lives a burden to the earth, but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master-spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life. It is true, no age can restore a life, whereof, perhaps, there is no great loss; and revolutions of ages do not oft recover the loss of a rejected truth, for the want of which whole nations fare the worse."

"There's a catch somewhere," said Kurt, "and don't you try to get away with it!"

"What's the catch?"

"Milton is talking about a *good* book. Who is to determine what is a good book? Certainly you're not going to leave that up to the author and his friends? You have to fall back on Plato's idea and let the magistrates decide."

"I'm afraid history is against you on that," I said. "Many of the best writings in the past were damned and double-damned by the magistrates of their times, from the days of Abélard to the days of James Joyce."

"Whom would you leave it to?"

"To those who render the final decision in any case: time and posterity. The least we can do is to give a book the chance to appeal to this court of last resort without first burning it or the author or both."

"If you're trying to sneak in analogies," Kurt said, "you're on the wrong track completely. Hans Bayer is very lenient, as a matter of fact."

"I'm glad to hear it," I said. "Someday, however, when he misunderstands what you have written, or when there is a genuine basis for disagreement, he may forget his good nature. Can't you imagine Hans making a mistake?"

I tried to picture this mysterious stranger of whom I had heard so much in the past decade. All I could go by was hearsay and a few photos. One of these stood on the little table near the couch where Kurt had put it—a man of about forty, I should say, with a strong clean-shaven face and a firm mouth and the eyes looking out intently straight ahead and betraying no secrets of the mind or heart.

"Yes," Kurt said reflectively, "Hans has made mistakes. Who doesn't? He must have made a pretty bad blunder a couple of years ago when they sent him to cool his heels in the Argentine. But how

can you compare a serious matter like that with a trifle like my poetry?"

"If you did not consider it a trifle," I said, "you might be able to write better poetry. Then, perhaps, you wouldn't like anyone to censor it."

"I'm no Milton, if that's what you mean."

"If you were, you would fight as hard as he did for the right to utter your thoughts without that magisterial interference which you find so delightful in Plato."

I opened the window and looked out into the deserted street. The skies were dark blue and clear and there were brilliant stars over the spires of the great, sleeping town. I began to feel sorry for some of the things I had said. My skepticism, which spared nothing, spared my own thoughts least of all. How can you belittle a giant like Plato who tried to find a way to establish justice among unequals? You know damned well that Kurt submits to the magistrates because he identifies them completely with the best interests of his community. Isn't it true that great men of action understand the world of fact better than the poets, whose province is the world of truth? Only true law perfects the noblest of dramas. If Kurt knew English history better he might have said to me: how can you look at Milton and not see the immense figure of Cromwell behind him? For the world of fact, Cromwell; for the world of truth, Milton. Yes, Milton never submitted his poems to the censorship of any magistrate, and you are asking Kurt to act like a demigod. How many men could bear the loneliness that went with Milton's grandeur? The great English poet had God to lean on. Kurt does not believe in God, and he needs someone to lean on, someone to resolve his doubts, palliate his sense of guilt with censure, sustain his self-regard with praise. He leans on Hans Bayer the way I once leaned on my father, Uncle Peter, Professor Boucher. Upon whom do you lean now? A shadow called Man—a shadow that may never exist in a future that may never come. Your arrogance is more shameless than Kurt's fear.

turned from the window to hear what Kurt was saying:

"Anyway, if by some miracle I could be transformed into a great poet, I would choose to be like Dante."

I closed the window. The room was rather chilly, so I started for my little gas stove.

"Some coffee?" I said.

"Yes," said Kurt.

I lit the stove and went back to my armchair. Kurt stretched out on the couch, lit another cigarette and blew the smoke ceilingward.

"Why Dante of all people?" I said.

"To describe the inferno in which men suffer today."

"What's your purgatory?"

"The rising of the peoples."

"And your paradise of course is that heavenly hour when society is ready to take from each according to his abilities and give to each according to his needs."

"What else could it be?" said Kurt, laughing.

He was wide awake now and his face seemed younger than his actual years; that made me feel older than mine, as old as the continent which trembled around us in the night with undefined catastrophes and nameless fears.

"There are other possibilities," I said.

Kurt sat up tensely and leaned forward like a young boxer waiting for the gong to release his next blow. Words, words and behind them ideas, and behind these feeling and will; and behind, ahead and above all these the conflict, the surging aspiration toward undefined, nameless goals.

"What possibilities?" Kurt demanded.

"New labels for the same old dream which can never come true. Our coffee is ready."

I took our cups to the sink, let the lukewarm water run over them, dried them with a towel and filled them with fresh coffee. Kurt sipped his in silence for a while, then said:

"Labels don't matter, and it's not the old dream, and the new one will come true."

"Sure," I said, "our young Dante will enter the new paradise and at last embrace Beatrice according to his needs and, let us hope, his abilities."

Kurt laughed and said:

"I'm afraid I didn't make myself clear about the modern *Comedy*. I couldn't do it, but someone will. It's in the essence of our time. Eventually we'll all be compelled to start where Dante left off, to survey and reappraise the whole of our past—which was his future. Perhaps after the next great war writers will put into their books not only themselves, their friends, their enemies and recent historical personages; but also legendary and Biblical figures, and characters of all the great fiction we have read and who are so real to us; and those more distant historical figures who ought to be made real again; and the women we have loved as we would like them to be; and the children who grow up to remold the future; and the great thoughts of our age which will shine above everything and through everything once it becomes whole, single and manifest to all; and finally that love which is bound to fill the hearts of men in all their undertakings. And the writers who will first attempt this will be compelled to resemble Dante, not in the scope of his genius

or the grandeur of his poetic power, but in the basic motives which impel them; for they, also, by the very nature of our times, will be singed by love, wounded by politics and isolated by learning."

"You've omitted something as usual," I said. "Your new writer will need a religion of some kind to make everything clear for him. Otherwise, he will not be able to say to us with authority as Dante said: Consider your nature; you were not made to live like beasts, but to pursue virtue and knowledge."

"Why does one need a religion to say that?" Kurt demanded.

"I don't mean a theology; I mean a faith."

"The faith is here!" he exclaimed. "Our faith—the religion of a free humanity, free to master the earth, itself, the mysteries of existence!"

Words: signals in the climb upward from chaos, pillars of fire in the night, antennae, soundings in the oceans of thought, weapons for combat.

"Kurt," I said, "you are vainly beating your luminous wings in the void. Everything appears to you simple, beautiful and good. It isn't so. I've lived longer than you, and I know. The human heart is full of envy, hatred, greed and murder."

"Our faith will change all that."

"Will it? What about Hans Bayer and your poem?"

"It's a little thing."

"Little things can become big things."

"Were you at the front during the war?" said Kurt.

"Yes."

"I've heard that when you advance against the enemy, you may be killed by the barrage of your own artillery."

"What are you driving at?"

"When you enlist in a war, above all in a sacred war like ours for the liberation of mankind, you gladly surrender your life from the beginning. Millions must sacrifice themselves that the new world may be born: forasmuch as it was in thine heart to build an house for my name, thou didst well in that it was in thine heart; notwithstanding thou shalt not build the house; but the son which shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house for my name, says the Bible. It is an accident whether you are annihilated by the fire of the enemy or the barrage of your own artillery. How can that possibly affect the ultimate victory or your faith in it?"

"I am not speaking of accidents," I said. "I am speaking of persecution."

"A stupid, meaningless word," Kurt snapped. "It depends who punishes whom and for what purpose."

He began to take off his shoes. Had I found the weakness in his

armor or was he really sleepy? It was getting very late and I had an early class the following morning; but for my own peace of mind I could not let the argument rest there.

"Ah, to be sure," I said ironically, picking up an open book which lay face downward on the desk. I had been using it for an essay I was writing on early Christianity. I turned the pages till I located what I wanted. "Nobody has put it better than St. Augustine: The wicked persecute the good with the blindness of the passion which animates them, while the good pursue the wicked with a wise discretion, in the same way as a surgeon carefully considers on what part of the body he is making an incision, while the murderer is perfectly indifferent where he strikes."

"Exactly!" said Kurt.

"I suppose it's time to quit," I said. "You must be dead tired, and I owe you a thousand apologies."

"I wouldn't have missed this for worlds," Kurt said.

He stretched the sheets across the couch and slipped the pillow case around the cushion and I helped him. Live like a philistine, think like a demigod. He slipped into bed and lit a last cigarette. I went into my own room and left the door open.

"There's only one trouble," I said through the open door. "What decides who is wicked and who is good? Magistrates can make mistakes."

"Leave that to time and posterity," said Kurt. "The same court of last resort that judges the poet also judges the magistrate, and woe to either when in the name of an abstract idea he permits evil to destroy good. That's why I like Plato's notion of the magistrate as a tragic poet. In genuine tragedy every man does what he thinks is right and takes the inevitable consequences."

"In genuine tragedy," I said, "every character must act with the utmost sincerity. Even Iago means what he says."

"Who can measure sincerity?" said Kurt. "But for that matter, I have never met a more sincere man than Hans Bayer."

"You think very highly of him."

"So will you when you get to know him. Hans is wiser than either of us. He doesn't waste time on idle chatter like this. What concerns him are the real dangers and real hopes of the world. He senses catastrophe and organizes the people to combat it. He would laugh at us for toying with yesterday's theories, and urge us to get back to the palpable, the real, the everyday. Can you contradict him?"

"It's too late to contradict anybody," I said. "Let's get some sleep."

"Good night, Paul," he said, turning out the light.

"Good night, Kurt."

I closed the door of my room, turned out the light and crawled into bed. Darkness destroyed the illusion of everlasting security and I could not sleep. For the first time in years the rigid rational barriers of the mind relaxed and revealed those realms of reverie in which part of our true self has its secret being, and I was grateful to the poet for easing the hardness of my heart and reconciling me to a world I had ceased to love. Wasn't it strange that, of all people, he should have invoked Dante? What tremendous spiritual power, what enormous cultural resources! That was essential, too. The sublime Italian did not have to invent basic values. They were there in the surrounding world. For everyone, leopard, lion and wolf represented lust, pride and avarice; for everyone these were three terrible vices or sins. For every possible reader of the *Comedy*, Virgil was not a painful task for schoolboys but a great living poet, part of Europe's rich tradition, now part of her rebirth, she who is perennially reborn. For all, the Blessed Virgin was the symbol of divine mercy and Rachel the symbol of contemplation; just as power was the special attribute of the Father, wisdom of the Son, love of the Holy Ghost. Was Kurt's fantasy valid? Shall we someday have a great modern poet who will assemble, revive and re-create into a single vast design the basic credos of our time, finding and setting down appropriate, stirring symbols for them?

Thoughts like these had not come to me for a long time. Perhaps that was the business of the living poet—to awaken our sleeping hearts, to revive that freshness of perception which comes to us without effort in youth and which time buries under the debris of habit and doubt.

Would Kurt's imaginary poet of the future begin where Dante left off, the year 1300, ending the Middle Ages and opening the Renaissance? Times almost as bloody, treacherous and appalling as our own, and not nearly so creative. But Dante's world had faith; the wicked were punished in hell; the deserving cleansed in purgatory; the good rewarded in heaven. The torments of the poet's hell were the sins themselves recognized by their results.

The first light of dawn now came through the windows of my room, and still I could not sleep.

Moderns do not like the word *sin*. Let them find another word to say that the consequences of wrong conduct is suffering, if not in fact then in conscience. Is it? Did the conscience of Cesare Borgia prick him ever, or that of Henry VIII or Pope Alexander? A Vienna criminologist once told me: You would be surprised how easily murder sits on the conscience. The old problem of the square and the circle, the real and the ideal. But what is the matter with Kurt? Isn't it the poet's business to insist on the ideal world without whose

authority the real world would exterminate itself? Whatever its jargon or ritual, the meaning of all true morality is the same: to renounce our primitive, barbarous, infantile impulses for the higher aims of mankind; and reason must show us the delicate balance between our natural inclinations and their effects upon other people, therefore, in the long run upon ourselves.

Early morning, and the heavens unbelievably glorious with light! I had not had a wink of sleep but felt as fresh as a runner about to spring from the starting line. In the study Kurt was fast asleep, and I tiptoed by so as not to wake him. Shaving, I whistled softly to myself the *Gaudeamus Igitur*.

I am recalling the whole detailed evening, doctor, for several reasons. In the long run, I was very much affected by Kurt's deep love of life, alert mind, warm heart, affectionate regard for other people, and above all his profound integration of the spirit based upon a whole, steady, incorruptible view of life. That I did not share his secular theology was another matter. He had already begun to dispel my frightened belief in the decline and doom of civilization, so comforting because it relieved me of all moral responsibility and placed everything in the hands of fate wearing the mask of historic law. I liked him, too, because like every real poet he was something of a philosopher; and it did not matter that he could not express his thoughts in technical, logical terms but only in flashes of insight and bright flares of hope, a hope which ranged with such certainty and ease from fragments of Plato to that assured hour when the new golden rule would be inscribed on every human heart. How he scorned the gospel of doom! And how clearly his intuition beheld that forms of civilization may die, but civilization itself cannot die, that man's creative energy, forever renewed by faith, hope and love, rises forever from its own ashes.

Kurt's faith in the future roused my own torpid faculties; I was grateful to this poet and all poets who sound the trumpet call to life.

But I also remember this strange evening because it was then that I first heard Kurt acquiesce in the fate which was to overtake him in the end.

8

. The earth is given into the hand of the wicked.

—The Book of Job.

KURT HAD COME to Vienna for three months. He stayed a year. From the first he threw himself into the life of the city as if he had been born there, and no aspect of it was alien to him. I often wondered where all his energy came from. He put in long hours every day and nearly every evening at the offices of *The Future*; at meetings, lectures, conferences; at sessions of Parliament and gatherings of trade-unions; in short, at every form of public activity which my father and his circle considered vital. He read and reviewed the latest books, dashed off articles on questions of the day, worked for weeks on ten lines of verse; yet somehow he also found time to see friends and lead a social life which ranged from dances with a purpose at Floridsdorf to the exclusive parties given by Helga.

Perhaps one of the reasons for this endless flow of energy was Kurt's basic attitude toward the world and the response it evoked in others. Many of us waste a great deal of time and vital force in conflict with ourselves and those around us; doubts, suspicions, fears exhaust us. In the secret recesses of the heart we consider every new acquaintance a possible enemy until he has proved himself a friend; and every old friend is capable of rousing our jealousy or wounding our vanity in a thousand ways. We squander hours of time and tons of energy worrying about what others say about us, and saying things about others which we know ought not be said. And since our relations with our fellow men are so full of friction, our relations with ourselves cannot be much better. The same aggression, rivalry and intrigue which mar the external world at last enter deep into our souls and we become our own enemies. We are tortured by doubt concerning ourselves, our friends and our loves; we have no real certainty about our place or value in the world; and we wrangle with our work as if it were a devil intent upon destroying us.

Kurt's life was, to begin with, integrated around a great purpose which was at once that of his world and his own. He was free of

doubt, suspicion and fear. He considered every new acquaintance a friend until he proved himself an enemy, and he begrudged his friends nothing. Their successes elated him, their failures depressed him as if they were his own. He never forgave a slight because he did not even know it was there. For him, faith, hope and love was not a phrase to be invoked on lofty occasions, but the warp and woof of his very soul, the essence of his daily existence. So easily and thoughtlessly did this warm flow of life emanate from him and fill his every action, that people responded by trusting him completely, by catching fire from his unflagging aspiration, and by treating him with an affection which expected nothing in return because it already felt itself amply rewarded.

My father, of course, adored Kurt and was grateful for his help on the magazine; and the people at Floridsdorf treated him as if he were a favorite son or brother.

That was, perhaps, to be expected. What I found truly surprising was the good impression Kurt made in circles which loathed everything he stood for in the social conflict raging all around us. Here people appeared ready to forgive the program for the sake of the man whose sincerity seemed to them at first incredible, then something at once precious and harmless. If he was ever really aware of it, Kurt did not resent their attitude. This belated Shelley of the Rhineland hated a system without hating persons; and he was certain in the deepest recesses of his heart that moral integrity and sincerity of thought are, in the long run, never harmless to the evil forces of the world.

Most surprising of all, one of the poet's ardent admirers turned out to be Helga. The countess—she was still called that despite her marriage to Ritter—was now more restless and unhappy than ever. Her hardened beautiful face showed the strain of the conflict in which she was engaged day after day and whose object was a mystery even to herself. Once more she was giving large, brilliant parties from which her husband was absent. Nameless, insurmountable barriers had grown up between Ritter and herself. Several times she alluded to the subject in those intimate talks which constituted the basis of our friendship. She told me that in these days, when politics separated father from son and mother from daughter, she could not feel close to Ritter. The superindustrialist was actively backing the Nazis both in Vienna and in Berlin, while Helga was strongly nationalist in feeling, anxious to save her country from being swallowed by its northern neighbor and naïvely confident that the little chancellor would effect that salvation.

There must have been other reasons for her domestic difficulties. If, in spite of her real motives for marrying Ritter, her erotic rela-

tions with him had ever been what she really wanted, they certainly could not be that now. He was away a great deal of the time, and it was obvious that his absence was due to something besides intense preoccupation with vast affairs. Ritter was deliberately avoiding a wife who caused him more pain than pleasure. In many ways, Helga's second marriage was a replica of her first; the new husband could not change her old pattern. Rumors around town indicated that what Ritter most resented was Helga's attempt to run his affairs, to dominate him completely in every aspect of his life, great and small. His resistance to her will toward uncompromising supremacy made Helga feel he was an old-fashioned despot who did not understand the emancipation of woman. She considered herself an aggrieved, martyred slave imprisoned in the tyrant's palace, which was at once too terrible to endure and too pleasant to leave. She therefore conducted a kind of underground revolution against Ritter, as she had previously conducted one against the old count. Then she had turned to money to aid her against ancient aristocratic titles; now she turned to art to aid her against money, of which she had more than enough anyway. These days her salon was filled chiefly with writers, painters, musicians, dramatists, actors and journalists. This gave her the conviction that Ritter failed to appreciate her not only as a free woman, but also as a free spirit able to soar above the sordid business affairs she had failed to dominate and to rise into the highest realm of the spirit where gifted men accepted her as queen.

When I first brought Kurt to one of Helga's parties, she did not pay much attention to him. The guests did. Artists, demiartists and camp followers of art surrounded the young poet and asked him a thousand questions about his successful play in Berlin, about his verse, and above all about his literary experiences over There—a subject of widespread interest in those days. When Helga noticed the stir Kurt had created, he immediately rose in her esteem and she appropriated him. From then on he became one of her favorite lions. For reasons which will transpire later, I shall never forget the way she introduced Kurt to a famous editor at one of her parties. At that moment, the editor was talking to a small group of guests which included Uncle Peter and myself.

"I want you to meet," Helga said, smiling radiantly, "the most remarkable young man in Vienna today."

The editor frowned into his gray, square beard, surveyed Kurt from head to foot with distant eyes and asked sharply:

"What's remarkable about him?"

"Everybody likes him," said Helga, as if that were any kind of recommendation to another man, especially one who, like Kurt himself, dabbled in words.

After Helga had taken Kurt away to another part of the room to show him off to other guests, Uncle Peter turned to me and said:

"Isn't that the poet who is staying at your apartment?"

"Yes."

"Do you like him?"

"Very much."

"He's going to get into trouble someday."

"Why? He's kind as an angel and naïve as a child."

"Too many people like him," said Uncle Peter gravely. "Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you."

If that was true, then it might also be said that Kurt in turn liked too many people. There were gradations, of course. Nobody could compete in his esteem or affection with the absent, mysterious Hans Bayer, who was for him teacher, guide, friend and legend. But in general Kurt treated most people with warm generosity, and at the very least with sympathetic understanding. I remember how he once rebuked me for my attitude toward Helga.

"You're unjust to her," he said one night when we were alone in my study. "Why do you insist she's spiritually ill from a lust for boundless power?"

"Isn't it true?" I said.

"That's one way of looking at it," said Kurt. "There's another way, too. She's an intelligent, energetic woman with a certain amount of talent. If society in this part of the world had a place for her, she would find some outlet for her energies and gifts; she would be useful, therefore happy. Women like herself have found suitable careers over There. Even in America such women seem to have a place in the world outside their homes. But here tradition decrees that she must be a parasite. She must employ all her energies and talents as the satellite and servant of a man who may be her inferior. But even if he is her equal or superior, how can his work and achievements satisfy her normal craving for creative labor? She is frustrated on this score. She hasn't any children to compensate her for this frustration, though for a woman like Helga that would still not be enough. She wants work of her own, a place in the world. She's a personality and wants to be treated as such. Instead she's compelled to move in a world of aggression, ruthless rivalry, cynical intrigue. It is on this level alone that she can function. Is it any wonder she functions as a sour rebel? She is not a bad woman at all; she is only a victim of her class and its hopeless corruption. She wants the best life can offer, and this is the best she can find here. In these surroundings, how can she know the difference between the elite and the elect, or between the glamour of despotism and the authority of the people. And these women can't walk out, either.

That's easy to say but not so easy to do. It takes a major catastrophe to shake them out of their rotten world. Then they either perish or are reborn." He looked at me for a few moments and added smiling: "But you are yourself impressed by Helga's power, Paul! It pervades all the exalted circles and you respect it even on that level."

At the same time Kurt considered these women morally and—by that transvaluation of values which was typical of my father's circle—even socially inferior to the working girls of Floridsdorf and Ottakring. These he admired immensely for their strength of character, independence of mind and correctness of viewpoint, and among them he found the only two women who were really close to him during his stay in Vienna.

Social life, however, was a very small thing for Kurt. Most of his time was devoted to work. He was especially concerned with the startling growth of reaction both in his own country and here in Vienna. He insisted on going everywhere and seeing everything for himself, and he did not have to urge me very hard to go along. For me it was an adventure, for him a scouting expedition. He was on the scent for evidence of the secret, treacherous propagation of the gospel of lies by those whom he considered the main foes of society. And the evidence was there all around us. I was with Kurt, for example, in the crowded, festive streets of the city the night they celebrated the birthday of our little chancellor. The air crackled and glowed with Japanese fireworks; then tiny parachutes came floating down the night skies and from them hung—swastikas.

"People are asleep," Kurt said earnestly. "Catastrophe is moving to overwhelm them. We must wake them up before it is too late!"

Week after week he ran in the pages of *The Future* the evidence he collected from eyewitness experiences, from letters, from newspapers. He sharply indicted the *Neuigkeits Weltblatt*, a Christian Socialist paper in Vienna, for publishing a poem called *Morituri te Salutamus: we who are about to die salute thee!* This poem pretended to pay homage to our little chancellor; but when you read the first letter of each line downward as an acrostic, it spelled *Heil Hitler!* Kurt also called attention to the fact that in the provinces brown spies prowled about at night and branded cattle with the swastika; or planted potatoes in the shape of the swastika along the railway tracks where they could be seen from train windows; or set a swastika of burning lamps floating down the Danube at dusk; or painted the swastika on towering boulders and rocks; or burned wood in that menacing shape on the hills at night, so it could be seen for miles around; or attached rubber stamps to their shoes and marked the swastika on the sidewalks of Vienna. All this agitated

Kurt no end. He saw great portents in these small signs, and ignored our jokes about his "intuition."

And he saw the danger not only flowing down to us like sewer water from the north, but as something which was already festering here at home. Again and again he addressed meetings in Floridsdorf, Ottakring and in the very heart of the city on the dangers of rule by decree. The previous fall our little chancellor had discovered a wartime law granting the government emergency powers to deal with all economic questions arising out of new conditions. That law had never been repealed; and now, against the protests of people like my father and Teddy Hoffman, Dollfuss applied the law to evade control by Parliament. Finally, in the spring of the year when Kurt lived among us there was a wrangle in Parliament over a railway strike, and the government could make no headway against labor opposition. The little chancellor then employed a parliamentary trick to disband Parliament. The new constitution had not yet been drafted, there was no legislature, and the little chancellor simply ruled by decree.

"The dictatorship of the Right is here!" Kurt exclaimed at meetings, in the pages of *The Future* and in private conversations, trying to warn everyone who would listen.

He was concerned, too, with alarming news from home. Hans Bayer, Janos Vekely and Rudolf Immerman were writing more and more frequently from Berlin as the situation became increasingly tense. The first month of that year they reported that lean, dog-faced Franz von Papen was spinning a subtle plot; he was going to use everybody he could as a tool for his Junker policy, and one of these tools was to be Hitler himself. As I watched my father and Kurt poring over these letters and reports from Berlin, the pieces of the mad puzzle seemed to fall into a dark pattern. Nine months previously, a senile field marshal had been re-elected president. All liberals and socialists had supported the wooden Titan in the firm belief that he would save the country from the brownshirts. The November elections had been hopeful; the Nazi vote had taken a terrific slump; their movement seemed to be disintegrating; the Fuehrer had threatened to commit suicide! Now bright hope seemed to be vanishing. Dogface and his Junker friends were muddling things most efficiently; they persuaded the dying old colossus to save the agriculture of the Junkers from "agrarian bolshevism" which might expose the corrupt use of state subsidies; and they drew the net of conspiracy tight around the army officer destined to be the last republican chancellor of the northern land.

Kurt read these reports and shuddered. His intuition assured him things would not come off well at all.

"The Nazis were dying," he insisted. "There was a golden opportunity to finish off Hitler once and for all. Instead they are negotiating with him. They need him now; but once they hoist him into the saddle, he won't need them, and the slaughter of the innocents will begin with that of the guilty."

Even my father laughed at Kurt's exaggerated fears, insisting the real danger came from other quarters. But the poet followed every twist and turn of events in his homeland with increased foreboding. He was anxious to return to Berlin, to "take part in the most crucial fight of all," as he put it. But he could not get permission to leave Vienna. Hans Bayer wired him to remain where he was; and, as a matter of discipline, Kurt stayed on with us, counting the hours to that spring day when he would be allowed to return to his native country. Meantime, he cultivated my uncle Peter, who was planning to attend a Catholic Congress in the middle of January somewhere in central Germany and afterward to see persons of consequence in Berlin.

Uncle Peter was away a week. The day he came back to Vienna from that pilgrimage, he dropped in to see me at my apartment late in the afternoon. Kurt was there, anxious to hear the latest news from his homeland. But first Uncle Peter must tell us all about the congress, how various delegates from the north poked fun at him for the "baroque Catholicism" of Austria, how severely they rebuked him because at Viennese religious festivals they sang a profane composition like Bruckner's Mass, which was, after all, no more than a concert piece. Through this long, leisurely narration, Kurt paced nervously up and down the study, smoked one cigarette after another and waited for my Uncle Peter to get down to the real thing. My uncle, who knew perfectly well what bothered Kurt and considered his fears ridiculous, took his time, and it was not until several hours of torturing the poet with suspense that he said:

"And now I suppose you want to hear about the brown menace? Well, gentlemen, rest easy. There is none. The plans of the wiser heads have worked out very well."

"What grounds have you for this fantastic optimism?" Kurt asked sharply.

"The best in the world," said my uncle. "I had the privilege and the pleasure of being received by Chancellor von Schleicher himself. He assured me in so many words that Hitler is no longer a problem. The question of Hitler, the chancellor told me, has been definitely settled. The Nazis are no longer a political danger. They are done for!"

Uncle Peter lit his pipe and smiled with deep satisfaction, but Kurt was not convinced.

"Tell me this," he said. "Did von Schleicher tell you anything about his attempts to co-operate with the Nazis?"

"Oh yes," said Uncle Peter. "Co-operation was discussed. But the Nazis demanded from the chancellor nothing less than the Ministry of Defense. They knew he would never grant it, and that settles their hash."

"But the chancellor of the republic did negotiate with them, he *did* discuss co-operation," Kurt persisted.

"He did," said Uncle Peter. "That's politics."

"No," said Kurt; "that's the end."

A week after we heard that pleasant assurance from the very highest sources, the world was startled by the news that the wooden Titan in Berlin had appointed Hitler chancellor. The Fuehrer at once dissolved the Reichstag and ordered an election for March.

Less than a week before that spring balloting was to take place, hell brook loose in Germany, and the trick by fire opened the way for the purge by blood.

That week Kurt hardly came home at all. He worked day and night at Floridsdorf. My father, too, led a strenuous life, explaining, agitating, organizing. For the real meaning of Kurt's foreboding now became clear. The story of that ghastly triumph by fraud and force has been told a thousand times since and today every schoolboy knows it; the stark, barbarous facts have become matters of elementary knowledge like the multiplication table. For a decade the world has been haunted by that frightful nightmare, all of it—from the burning of the Reichstag building; the cynical trial of innocent men for a crime which the brown monsters had themselves committed; the heroic conduct of that defendant who accused his accusers and branded them guilty in the eyes of mankind; the arrest and incarceration of thousands of men and women who had devoted their lives to the poor and the oppressed; the dissolution of all liberal and labor groups which spoke in the name of the people; the insane fury with which a great, defenseless race was hounded and tortured; the crushing of every kind of civil right—all, all of it is known and remembered down to that last shabby, legalistic trick which formally established the brown dictatorship. Who cannot recall it at will? What is harder to recall is the impact with which the news of it all struck an unsuspecting world when it *was* news and not history; when it came fresh, unawaited, incredible. I don't know how you in America received the news, doctor, but I can assure you that it hit Vienna like a ten-ton bomb whose explosion was all the more terrific because the expanding nightmare was so near at hand, and because we knew in our hearts that every bit of it ought to have been expected just as it happened.

The impact was absolutely shattering for still another reason. We had been living in poverty and conflict for a decade and a half; we had become accustomed to street barricades, marching feet, flying banners, battlecries and countercries, the rattle of machine guns from rooftops, promises of salvation and threats of destruction. But this was different: now supreme evil called all modern knowledge to its aid and all the fantasies of the disordered imagination and all the power of falsehood and all the instruments of annihilation; and by these, coldly and relentlessly enthroned violence as a fierce, uncompromising god to be obeyed, worshiped and assuaged with innocent blood.

Kurt had expected this for a long time, and his first thought was to launch organizations in our city to aid the victims of the brown terror in his homeland. Among those victims was Janos Vekely, who had been thrown into an isolated concentration camp somewhere near the borders of Austria and Switzerland to keep him as far from the capital as possible. Friends wrote both my father and Kurt that if Janos Vekely was not killed at once, he would rot in the concentration camp to his dying day. Rudolf Immerman and Hans Bayer were more fortunate. They happened to be in Paris when the terrible hour of endless crime struck. Now they also rushed to organize aid from the outside and to rouse the world to the danger which threatened all of it. They were working with a group close to that great, lovable French writer who launched a world-wide antifascist movement. Hans Bayer wired Kurt urging him to stay on in Vienna until further orders, and to be cautious in corresponding with friends in the north while direct correspondence was still possible. Soon an underground movement would be organized, and they would somehow convey the details to Kurt and my father.

The new, tense struggle now took all of Kurt's time and energy. For several months I saw him only occasionally. He rose before I did and was off to Floridsdorf for the day; and by the time he came home in the late hours of the night, I was already asleep. One afternoon, however, he came to see me at the university unexpectedly, and it was then that for the first time he revealed something of his background.

9

. . . the hierophants of an unapprehended inspiration; the mirrors of the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon the present.

—A Defense of Poetry

IT WAS a late May afternoon and I was teaching the last class of the day. Gray rain shook the windows; the students were restless and anxious to get home.

"You, Delbrueck, where did he push the empire now?"

"Northwest, sir."

"Where northwest?"

"Into the valley, sir, between the Tigris and the Euphrates."

"Good. That will do. Now tell me, Miss Kenner, what did he do with the conquered areas?"

"He established Assyrian colonies, sir."

"Why?"

"To defend his empire against the nomads of the north."

"Fine. Hildebrand, tell us what he conquered in the west."

The tall, pimple-faced boy with the glasses scrambled heavily to his feet and looked helplessly out the window.

"I don't know, sir," he said.

"Anybody!"

"The land of Musri!" several voices shouted from various parts of the room.

"Right. You may sit down, Hildebrand. Yes, in conquering the land of Musri, north of Syria, near the great Mediterranean Sea, Shalmaneser I brought Near Eastern civilization close to the civilization of the Achaeans. Now, can anyone tell me what the king said of himself in the inscription he left after beating his enemy in Mitanni? All right, Hildebrand."

"He called himself the sun of his land, who makes his people prosperous, the protector of boundaries."

"The quotation is accurate, Hildebrand, only it wasn't Shalmaneser who said it."

"Nebuchadnezzar!" several voices called out.

"That's right. It was the king of the Babylonians who said that. Now, Miss Wegele, open your book and read us the inscription left by Shalmaneser."

The slim dark-haired girl near the window stood up and began to read:

"When at the command of the great gods, with the exalted powers of Ashur, my lord, I advanced against the land of Khanigalbat . . ."

She stumbled over the word and the class laughed.

"Go on, Miss Wegele," I said. "Read slowly."

". . . over difficult roads and narrow passes, I forced my way, I surrounded Shattuara, king of Khani, the army of the Hittites and Aramaeans with him. He seized the passes and my water supply. For thirst's sake and for a camping ground, my army bravely advanced against the masses of their troops and I fought a battle and accomplished their defeat. Numbers without count of his widespread soldiers I killed. Against him, at the spear point, unto the setting sun, I waged battle."

The door of the classroom opened and a student with a thin, scraggly mustache came in on silent toes. Miss Wegele looked up and stopped reading. I took the note which the student handed me, and read that Kurt was waiting in my office. It was almost four o'clock.

"Tell the gentleman," I said, "I shall be there in ten minutes." The student tiptoed out. "Now, Miss Wegele, go on with Shalmaneser's war communiqué to posterity."

A short, dry laugh rippled through the class and died down suddenly, giving way to the sound of rain on the windows.

"I devastated their lands," Miss Wegele read. "Fourteen thousand four hundred of them I overthrew and took alive captive. Nine of his strongholds and his capital city I captured. One hundred and eighty of his cities I overturned to mounds and ruins. The army of Hittites and Aramaeans, his allies, I slaughtered like sheep."

"That's fine, Miss Wegele," I said. "Like his predecessors, Shalmaneser flayed his war prisoners alive and hung their skins up on the fortress wall. And on this cheerful note, I think we can dismiss the class."

The students thundered to their feet and poured out the doorway. I cleaned up the desk and hurried to my office. Habit, compromise, intelligence, irony. Suppose the past were really to appear as part of the present, something not yet transcended? Suppose the past became the present? Suppose the face of the future were to change and become utterly transformed beyond anything we had hoped, dreamed or feared?

Kurt sat at my desk smoking. He looked tired and needed a haircut and shave.

"Forgive me for dropping in like this," he said, and his smile was also tired. "Your father chased me out of his office. He said if I didn't take some rest, I'd be altogether useless. That *was* your last class, wasn't it?"

I said yes and I was at his disposal and would take him first to a barbershop, then to a restaurant. He admitted he had not eaten since dawn.

Dinner and some Tokay refreshed him; despite its drawn pallor his face became clear and full of light again. We smoked afterward and for some time Kurt sat wrapped in thought trying to catch up with something. At last he said:

"I've written my mother in her Rhineland village. No answer. I wonder if they've arrested her. Of course—they have."

"Why should they?"

"You don't know them. I've fought against them in the streets of a capital we once called ours, and I know them. They've probably arrested her, and my sister, and her husband, and anyone who has ever spoken three words to me." He lowered his head, adding almost to himself: "Think of it, Paul: I can't do anything for my mother. I can't go back. I have no homeland. Can you possibly imagine what it means to be without a homeland?"

"I once read an American classic which described the nightmare life of a man without a country."

"I read that, too," said Kurt. "The fool repudiated his own people. This is different. Involuntary exile robs me of my country, but the millions enslaved at home have no country either. I am younger than you, Paul, but in the past few months I have become much older. I have just ended a complete life."

It was then that, for the first time, he began to reminisce of the past, about which he had never before spoken to me. He talked of it now as if it belonged to another man, as if it were a life which had already been lived completely from beginning to end, and whatever would happen in the future would be part of a wholly new existence. He spoke quickly, feeling that he ought not to speak of his past at all, yet that he ought to speak now at least to me who was outside his circle, who knew him and admired him only as a person and not as a colleague, and that he ought to get it over with as rapidly as possible.

He was born in a Rhineland village. His father was a civil servant in the local bureaucracy and a minor reserve officer in the army. His mother was a good, simple woman with no head for politics.

She was only puzzled that spring when her husband repeated over and over again: clouds are gathering, we are going to war. Kurt used to hear this, and without grasping the full meaning of the words, was terror-stricken. He was afraid of war without knowing what it was.

When war did come, his father went to the front, and his older brother, and his sister's husband, and Kurt was left alone with the women. His mother managed their little budget well. They even sent the boy to a Latin school. He would get up every morning at five o'clock and walk four miles to the schoolhouse, rain or shine.

During the next two years, life in the village became unbearable. They talked of one thing only: who has been killed today? There were four hundred families in the village, and each of them had someone wounded or killed at the front. For years afterwards Kurt remembered the day when his mother stood at the stove baking a cake, and suddenly from the house next door came a heart-rending cry, loud, piercing, hopeless, and his mother dropped the cake to the floor in pieces and stood motionless, and he knew the terrible message had come.

It was a Protestant village, and the center of communal life was the Lutheran pastor. Whenever someone was killed at the front, an army officer would notify the pastor, and the pastor would carry the dreadful news to the bereaved family. Kurt had already begun to read poetry, without knowing why he liked it or why it stirred such strange pools of feeling in his heart or sent wild circles of fancy spinning in his head; and he looked upon the pastor as an angel of death moving on silent feet from house to house bringing dark tidings. One day he brought the darkest news of all: Kurt's father had been killed. Later he came to say that his brother also had died in battle. As the war neared its end, Kurt started to write verse; it had vague, rebellious undertones, and was directed chiefly against the military clique that ruled his native land.

The war was over, the military clique had been defeated on the battlefields of the world, and at home the people began to scour the streets for food like famished dogs. Everybody was hungry and there was little bread anywhere. Kurt foraged for his mother and sister; he took the weekend train to the countryside and joined the crowds that picked apples and potatoes for their empty larders. He saw women with gray hair and green faces, ghosts rendered ill by famine; and he saw the military police take from these women the apples and potatoes they had picked in the fields. For years he remembered a scene at a railway station. A woman places her basket of potatoes on the floor. A policeman shouts to her: Give that up! There is a murmur from the crowd; people hold their own baskets

closer to their bodies. The woman stares at the policeman defiantly and says: I dare you touch that basket; if you do, I'll kill you and myself on the spot. The policeman retires in confusion.

That was the first time Kurt saw official power give way to the people's wrath inspired by famine. Later there were rumors of a revolt in a great harbor city; soon even Kurt's village was in an uproar. Soldiers ran through the streets, beat up officers, tore epaulets from their shoulders. It was a wild, terrible time, full of hunger and revenge, and a wonderful time also, full of hope and faith in the future.

The army came back demoralized. Kurt went with his sister to meet her husband at the railway station, and for the first time the trains of that sober, spotless land were not clean. Desperate, penniless people had smashed train windows, stripped leather from the seats for their shoes, seat covers for clothes, old woolen blankets for shirts. The soldiers were sick of their uniforms and threw them to the people, and everywhere you saw civilians in field gray, all they had to wear.

In this nightmare, Kurt tried to go on with his studies. He rented a room in the nearest big town and attended the Realgymnasium, struggling with Mommsen and Goethe. But you could not escape the great upsurge in the schoolhouse; the students organized groups, demanded reforms, insisted on the abolition of the authoritarian school system, elected councils of their own, sang the revolutionary songs which now sprang up everywhere, marched into the streets with workers' demonstrations and telegraphed greetings to Eugene Leviné and Ernst Toller in the people's republic of the south.

In leisure moments, Kurt read the poets and wrote verse. It seemed to him he had always done it; it was as natural as breathing. Bitter need had taught him to go for days without bread, but he could not live without poetry. The intensity of those days, the wild changing world around him, sent powerful rhythms beating through his head, and out of these rhythms phrases were born, and the phrases told Kurt secrets that had been hiding in his heart or in the shape of things around him. Because his poems were full of protest and hope, a local paper of advanced ideas published them and that rendered Kurt happy. More than anything else he did, this made him feel closer to the world, to humanity, to simple people around him, to the workers with whom he marched in the tumultuous streets of those days. He did not feel really alive or complete until the things that were hiding in his heart and in the sights and sounds of the world had found utterance in poetry; for then he knew that the deepest and truest part of him had spoken, and that those he loved had heard and recognized him as truly one of their own.

Shortly before Kurt graduated from the Gymnasium, there came the famous March action in the great shipping center of the land. It failed. Clever people said it was an isolated episode, unconnected with the rest of the country, incapable of expressing its mood. It was just a putsch, they said, a premature dream shattered in blood.

But soon something that was not at all a dream swept the country. Money depreciated fast; you could buy a loaf of bread with a million in paper, and the following day that sum got you only half a loaf. Men in privileged positions were stealing the property of the middle class. There was a bank on every corner and a black bourse on every block. Foreign troops of occupation spent money like water; native parvenus and demobilized officers drank and wenched in the *Nachtlokale*; sex starvation and the lust for money bit deep into the pores of society, into everyone everywhere.

At Kurt's school, the young students gambled furiously, swallowed great quantities of alcohol, coolly conducted all sorts of crazy erotic experiments. But the really smart thing to do was to make money by hook or crook; that showed you were a man of the times. At night, students prowled through the streets, cut telephone wires, sold them to junk dealers for copper. This brought them millions in paper. They spent it all in the gambling casino, the wine cellar, the *bordello*.

Kurt found everything depressing. He felt the revolution of the people had been lost; the dream of a free, happy world had received a terrific setback. He despised his teachers at the Gymnasium; they no longer permitted you to speak frankly; they had begun to teach the old Junker ideas again. Yes, the old was palpably, disgustingly returning; the army was climbing back into the saddle. Every Saturday night, army bands filled the town with brass music which Kurt had hoped never to hear again—the old national anthem of the Junkers. Discipline increased everywhere; poverty was abysmal, universal, horrible. What wrenched Kurt's heart most was to see old men and women, once secure and contented, still wearing the threadbare, respectable clothes of better days, searching garbage cans for discarded bits of food. The world stank with cynicism in those days, and Kurt admonished himself not to be sentimental: but old people, old women with white hair grubbing in the ash cans for a piece of stale bread!

At that moment, vultures on the crest of society grabbed millions, bought up palaces, masterpieces of art, costly furniture, rare musical instruments, houses, whole streets.

There was no future at home and no desire to study. Kurt was never a scholar; he was always restless in the classroom, he got more from people and things, from the visual, audible world, than from

textbooks. A lust for moving on overcame him, a passion for leaving everything behind, wandering in strange countries, seeking all that his homeland denied him. With three other students he set out on foot for the Swiss border, and entered that republic without legal papers and without money. But the sun was shining, they were young, and it seemed easy to get along by singing and stealing. How different from home this beautiful land was! What a paradise! No signs of poverty, no universal hatred, no mutual envy and suspicion. Everybody had plenty of food, and the peasants even gave you some—free of charge, whether you sang or not, just because you were young and a stranger and away from home. These were Kurt's *Wander- und Wunderjahre*: the years of wandering and wonder.

They walked into Italy on this weird, happy pilgrimage of post-war youth, and followed the Po and wandered through cities and villages in the sunlight. They were arrested again and again as spies for their country, as agents of an alleged international conspiracy against the established order, as vagrants, but they did not mind sleeping in jail. Most of the time, however, they slept in the fields. In the morning, Kurt would lie on his back, look up at the incredibly blue skies of the south, so alluring to the northern soul, and compose poetry in his mind. He had discovered a new world, one that he had never had the time to know intimately in the furious collapse of his homeland—the world of sensuous beauty, of the marvelous faces of women and the strong voices of men and songs floating across the grass and the waters, and the laughter of children filling the dusk with harmony and peace.

In Florence he picked up in a foreign-language bookshop a copy of Dante and read the biographical sketch which was to haunt his fantasy for years afterward. Seated on a park bench, oblivious to his companions and the surrounding noise, he read of the great poet's development during the conflict between Guelph and Ghibelline; how as a young man he wrote on love and philosophy; how he studied every available science in order to enrich and explain his poems; and how he became friends with the scholar Brunetto Latini, the painter Giotto, the musician Casella, the poet Guido Cavalcanti. And because Kurt's youth had been unhappy in the north and in our own time, he read with joy of the great poet's happy youth under the sunny heavens of Florence long ago. Then he went on to the point where civil war rent the city asunder, and the poet walked through streets resounding with the clash of arms and flowing with blood as the two contending parties fought in rebellion and counter-rebellion with dagger, sword and poison; with rumor, accusation, counteraccusation, libel and falsehood of every kind. And Kurt followed avidly and with a sense of foreknowledge the oscillations

between victory and defeat, the exiles and returns, the Sicilian Vespers, the massacres, raids, skirmishes, battles and wars, and how the great poet himself fought at Campaldino.

Kurt took the volume of Dante with him as his group of wander-birds continued their travels, and often at dusk, on the floor of a barn by candlelight or in a prison cell—he would follow the story of the poet he could neither meet nor forget. For years Kurt remembered the night he and his three companions slept in a warehouse along the Naples water front surrounded by men of fifty races and nationalities, all without money or friends in that strange country, all homeless, all without a future, all exiles. In the morning, he looked at those heirs of two thousand years of Western civilization. It was beastly hot and everybody wore a huge straw hat for protection against the semitropical sun, and the faces were devoid of hope and pity, and devoid also of all affection or respect for the continent which had betrayed them like an unnatural mother. And that morning, as Kurt and his friends ate breakfast in a sun-baked café, he opened his book and reread that part of the story where during thirteen years of turmoil and civil war the great Italian poet was sustained by the love of her whom he saw only once and never forgot even into eternity, by the memory of that first and last miraculous meeting when he beheld her as a child dressed in subdued crimson, and the spirit of life which dwelt in the most secret chambers of his heart trembled so violently that the least pulses of his body shook with it, and in trembling exclaimed: *Ecce deus fortior me qui veniens dominabitur mihi!* Then the death of the beloved, the shock so overwhelming that the poet could not be comforted, but at last found solace in the volume wherewith Boetius consoled himself as prisoner and exile, as if to lose the first delight of one's soul were indeed a most bitter form of prison and exile.

Still in Italy, Kurt and his friends began to receive letters from home. Their families were frantic, but why go back and to what? They walked their way under the broiling sun to the port of Genoa and took a boat for Spain—even farther south, the eternal flight of the oppressed northern soul. But one of the students in Kurt's group came from a very respectable family which knew exactly how to handle a situation like this. They cabled the Spanish authorities; the four boys were arrested, given the necessary papers and shipped home.

Home was just what Kurt had expected. There was no money to complete his studies and no work for a man with literary aspirations and a training in the classics. So he got a job in a factory, where he learned to respect the men behind the machines; rented a

room with a Protestant sexton half crazy from lack of food; and took some economics courses at the university, in the illusion that a subject which he neither understood nor liked would secure him a place in the world. He rose at six every day, put in a morning's work at the factory and bicycled to the suburbs where he got a free lunch from a local charity society. Then he bicycled home, washed up, did his lessons and went on to his classes.

All this time the city continued to be in an uproar with demonstrations, street fights, crowds begging for work or a crust of bread, mobs smashing shop windows, mounted policemen shooting at the people, armed uprisings, the thud of clubs, the crackle of rifles, the rattle of machine guns and the sight of blood on the boulevards of a great civilized town in the heart of the twentieth century.

Kurt went to another city, and it was the same thing over again: another factory, another futile economics course, more poverty, more starvation. But there was Dante for consolation—the awakened European's search in the past for some link between present and future. You could always read and reread how the great poet hurled himself from the realm of love, poetry and philosophy into the thick of contemporary politics, took part in the councils of his native city, served on embassies and held the office of prior—which was to become the source of all the most terrible miseries of his life. For again the storm of faction and civil war broke out between the Whites and the Blacks. And Dante sat among the city fathers who exiled the heads of the rival parties to a fever-laden climate, and the great poet exiled his old teacher and friend Guido Cavalcanti, and shortly after his return from exile the old man died. Later, when the Blacks returned to power, they banished hundreds of their antagonists, among them Dante; and he who had sent his teacher and friend into exile, now suffered exile himself on fantastic charges which his very judges knew to be false. The new authorities ordered that if the exiled poet were ever caught inside the city he had loved and served he was to be burned alive. Then the long exile, the endless wandering sustained by a great dream; for, tired of the sanguinary wars, the ravenous tumult of pride, envy and ambition, the poet looked toward the hills for the greyhound of deliverance who would chase from every city the wolf of cupidity; and out of this dream he wrote for two decades his sublime poem of a harmonious universe ruled by order, virtue, wisdom, justice and love.

Slowly and painfully—for in the grandeur of its concept, the beauty and precision of its utterance, it was not easy reading—Kurt grappled again and again with the vast comedy whose hero is the narrator himself, the incidents of which do not modify the course of the story, whose main episodes are theological and metaphysical

disquisitions; and whose aim is to reprove, rebuke, exhort; to form men's characters by teaching them what conduct will meet with reward and what with punishment. Kurt never really understood that tremendous work, and I doubt whether he ever made any strong effort to understand it in detail. What touched him vividly was its spirit—the contrast between the horrors of the age and the protest they evoked in the poet's heart—above all, the vast ordered structure he was able to see beyond the surrounding chaos. And it was then that Kurt, appalled by his own weakness of purpose and sickening limitations of power, first began to dream that somehow men in our own time would gather the fragments of their world, shattered by universal greed, hostility and violence, into a vision which assured in twentieth century accents a harmonious unity to be realized in the twenty-first.

How do such dreams arise? How do they wither and crumble to be buried under the dust which gray, empty days pour over our hearts? Kurt did not know; but that dream began to recede under the impact of senseless labor and poverty, and he began to be ashamed of it and at last forgot it along with his childhood. This was hardly the time for dreams; you had to find a place in the world or perish; and there was no place in the world for you, none at all, nowhere to go, nothing to do—unless you were willing to surrender to prevailing corruption.

In his search for a place in society, Kurt at last fled to the capital, obtained a hack job in an office that threatened to close any day, and joined a circle of students, amateur writers and young self-taught workers devoted to the cause. The confusion of thought was fantastic; but at least these people knew their place in the scheme of things. They were part of a world-wide movement which seemed to contain the most honest people to be found anywhere, men and women without axes to grind or personal careers to further, whose sole aim appeared to be that of combating the evils of the world and liberating the millions from ignorance and oppression. This was the most exhilarating thing which had happened to Kurt in the realm of fact; it was the first time in years his spirit had received assurance not from the great books of the past but from men living in the present and intent upon molding the future. It was also not a little frightening, for the world which Kurt now entered was a closed world. The organization was sectarian, strict, inelastic, rigidly disciplined. But were not these high and necessary virtues in a world of chaos, greed and blood? Did they not make for the greater solidarity of chosen combatants, for the most effective pursuit of the most splendid of all goals—the new golden rule which spoke in twentieth century accents of the shape of things in the twenty-first?

There were doubts, confusions, hesitations and fears, but always there was that vast, straight line of never-wavering light which pointed to the goal, and for the first time Kurt felt at home in the world. Poems came pouring out of him. He found himself studying and teaching, an integral atom of masses of people, carried along the great wave of struggle and hope. On the outskirts of the movement he found a brilliant, surging theater, a bridge between what one dreamed and what had to be done, and he began to write plays for the people. The new art had slogans all its own: *away from the past!* And even *away from nature!* All that counted was the moment as it pointed to the future.

It was after the production of his first play that he met Hans Bayer, then already known throughout the city as a popular leader. Hans came to deliver a series of lectures for the circle to which the poet belonged, and from the outset everyone was struck by his personality. Hans was a man of medium height, well-built, broad-shouldered, strong-faced, clean-shaven, gray-eyed, serene and deliberate in all his movements. What he had to say in his clear, firm, unhurried voice concerned itself exclusively with the world of fact, with the latest stages of the struggle, with immediate issues, so cruelly pressing now, so easily forgotten a year later, yet indispensable fragments that went to make up the great design. The word most frequently on his lips was *power*, which he described as the sole possible instrument of liberation; and in this realm, vague and undefined to Kurt, he was thoroughly at home. He knew every move of every rival party; the intrigues of every person, great and small, in each of the contending camps; what they wanted the world to believe and what they really intended; and he knew all the tricks and stratagems whereby wrong might be frustrated and right sustained.

Hans made everything in the realm of chaos, greed and blood seem lucid and certain; and nothing was more certain in his mind than that it would be overcome and transcended by the knowledge and mastery he represented. He brought to Kurt's circle the teachings of those great founders and leaders of the movement who had analyzed all and foreseen all, and his skill in applying this science to the most obscure problem of the moment was truly impressive.

From the moment they became friends—and it was Hans who sought out the poet—Kurt trusted him implicitly. Upon men like Hans, he said to himself, depends our victory in the long run; at the very best, people like myself can move only a few men to desire the good, but he can organize the many to fight for it, to transform that desire into reality.

And now Kurt's feelings about himself and his work underwent

a profound change. In the old days he had been very bitter about society's attitude toward the artist. He used to say: first they ignore the artist, scorn him, hound him, starve him, bury him in a pauper's grave; later, when they need someone to boast of, some beautiful name with which to veil the atrocities of their real life, they exhume the memory of the artist; he who created great works *despite* the horrors heaped upon him by his fellow countrymen, he who was crucified daily on the cross of national stupidity, greed, prejudice and ignorance is now held up to the world as a shining example of the national spirit. But after Kurt found his place in the world through the movement, he spoke differently, saying: when history needs great action, she finds the men to do it; when she needs great thoughts, she finds the men to think them; when she needs great books, she finds the men to write them; to you it was once a matter of life and death to say what needs to be said, but not to history; don't worry—what needs to be said will be said, if not by you then by someone else; the naturalist cannot be greater than nature, the poet cannot be greater than life; Goethe was right: in the beginning was the deed.

During the thirties, when the conflict became very keen and widespread, and the brown monster grew to vast proportions, and stratagems became puzzling and seemingly full of contradictions, Kurt rested secure in the faith that Hans and men like him everywhere knew what they were doing, and that in the end everything would come out all right. This faith altered Kurt's attitude toward many fundamentals, and reconciled him to many things he had feared since childhood. He understood now the meaning of sacrifice, death and righteous war; of that patient lifelong labor which prepares a rich harvest for future generations to garner; and he was no longer ashamed of his love for Dante, which returned to him as a part of his new integrated life.

As Kurt told me his story in Vienna at the end of his "completed life," at the moment when the brown triumph shocked him into recalling its beginning, his faith in Hans was stronger than ever. He referred to unexplained stratagems, to mistakes which might have been avoided; but the basic thing was right beyond the least shadow of doubt, and men like Hans knew what they were doing.

"No soldier," Kurt said to me that afternoon in Vienna, "loves his country less, or has less faith in all it stands for, or in the integrity and ability of his commanders because one battle has been lost, however vital."

Once he had ended his reminiscences and come to terms with the history of his hopes, Kurt was full of combat again. The thing to do now, he insisted, was to concentrate the fight against the brown menace.

"A mad dog is loose in Europe," he said. "We must destroy him before he destroys civilization. For this sacred war we must ignore old lines of demarcation and mobilize everybody."

The following day he threw himself with renewed ardor into the struggle which was his home, his very existence, his place in the world and the beginning of his second life.

10

*Those who have passed away, whom one wronged:
The dear ones who gave themselves ungrudgingly . . .
Alas how, when they are no more,
We love them with a sad and retrospective love.
—Les visages de la vie.*

ON A COLD Sunday night in February, I made my way across the bridge that spans the Danube to Floridsdorf. Since Kurt had gone off to Paris shortly after Christmas at Hans Bayer's request, my father had been working doubly hard and felt rather lonely. Obviously he missed the aid and companionship of the young poet, especially since *The Future* had been suppressed in the government's drive to destroy the people's press. At first my father had taken the loss of his paper very hard; it was a blow to the cause, and it robbed him of the precious center of his life. After he recovered from the first shock, he put a section of his old staff to work on various illegal publications, sometimes printed, more often mimeographed, which transmitted the necessary ideas to the more important districts of the city. There was talk of starting a new weekly, better suited to the new times, possibly entitled *Today*; but so far nothing had come of it, and under the prevailing reaction there was little likelihood that anything would.

I knew how lonely all this had made my father, and had begun to visit him more frequently. The year that Kurt had spent at my place had to some extent opened my heart to the world again; I felt closer to people. Above all, I felt very near to Father. The sight of his white head, the sense that he was spending his last years on earth in unremitting struggle for the dream that had animated his whole life, roused all my respect; and his unflagging love could not but evoke my own in an age when there was so little love in the world.

His labors at this time were prodigious, for the situation in our country was becoming more ominous from day to day. The attempt of a Nazi to murder the little chancellor in the corridors of Parliament the previous fall had failed to teach the government the neces-

sary lesson. They continued their war on the people, Europe's oldest and most persistent conflict, the assault of the Optimates upon the Populares. The little chancellor curtly turned down the urgent demands of labor organizations; he refused to reassemble Parliament, disband fascist groups, restore trade-union rights arbitrarily suppressed, revoke wage reductions or cancel antisocialist measures. He encouraged the Fatherland Front and other semifascist organizations to flourish, but insisted on dissolving the republican defense force, crushing labor papers, halting May Day parades. He even dissolved an old socialist singing society because at a jubilee concert one of its leaders dared to speak out against fascism and in favor of democratic freedom! The little chancellor, and with him the elite of the land, suffered from the illness upon which the brown menace was to batten and wax powerful in Europe. They were haunted by the specter. Better Hitler, they said, than the specter.

On my way to Floridsdorf that Sunday night I recalled the Catholic Congress which had met the previous fall to celebrate the five hundredth anniversary of the completion of St. Stephen's Gothic spire. With Uncle Peter I had attended the service in the square of the baroque Karlskirche. A lighted cross gleamed between the central columns of the church, and the great procession started. At its head, in resplendent robes and superb dignity, moved the papal legate, surrounded by Vatican guards, trailed by Knights of Malta, army officers and diplomats in full regalia. We followed the procession to the west door of St. Stephen's, and there flashed through my brain a swift fragmentary montage of those far-off days when I first went there as a child with my uncle, and later alone to seek solace in a forlorn world from the holy image of the Mother. I had not been inside for years; now I stood there with my uncle in the great mass of people before the cathedral, and saw Cardinal Innitzer and the clergy of St. Stephen's receive the legate. Thousands crowded the streets of the capital that day, men and women from every part of the country. At night there were torchlight processions headed by the little chancellor, and the following Sunday we attended the mass celebrated in Schoenbrunn Park before the high altar, and watched the sunlight fall on the old imperial palace in the background, monument of the remote, irrevocable past. Then came Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* inside the old church, and the special performance of *Parsifal* at the opera and I was profoundly moved.

But what had been the upshot of it all? The solemn festivities were concluded by an address which the little chancellor made at the race track to forty thousand uniformed native fascists. Certain things, he said, had passed away forever: the old party system, the

old liberalism, the old capitalism; let everyone join the Fatherland Front! The voice was the voice of Vienna, the words were those of Berlin.

At my father's apartment in Floridsdorf, I found him seated at his desk in shirt sleeves, surrounded by a group of friends engaged in a heated debate. Teddy Hoffman was among them, his hat tilted on the back of his head and a worried look on his plump face. They stopped long enough to exchange greetings and went back to their conference. My father smiled, put his hand on my shoulder kindly, said they would probably be there till midnight and would I wait or would I rather come back later. I said I would wait, took a seat in a corner of the large room, lit my pipe and listened. The men and women gathered around the desk were in a state of high tension. The civil conflict appeared to be approaching a climax, and they were discussing immediate policies and tactics. In the past few days, commanders of the people's Defense Corps had been arrested; the socialist district leaders of Vienna's twenty-one sections had also been arrested; police had occupied the party headquarters of the Social Democrats. There were rumors that native fascists were conspiring to seize the Town Hall, depose the socialist municipal authorities and crush all labor and liberal groups. That very morning the force of reaction had been felt right here in Floridsdorf; they had arrested a prominent labor leader without explanation.

I sat in the corner, smoked and listened, and soon the conference became silent and Teddy Hoffman rose to make a speech.

"They hate us," he said, "with a hatred boundless and vile because the people of Vienna have created the finest city in the world on a democratic basis. We have imposed Draconian taxes on their ill-gotten gains. Then, instead of lining our pockets with that money, as they encourage their own politicians to do, we have built all over the city things which the people and their children can use and enjoy: health clinics and municipal baths, gymnasia and sanatoria, schools and kindergartens. Above all, we have erected all these wonderful sunlit dwellings which house in decency and comfort sixty thousand families. How can the thieves and robbers whose only claim to pre-eminence is an inherited title, a Schieber's bank account, speculative stocks and bonds, dishonored epaulets or the hierarch's miter tolerate this? They want our blood, I tell you! They say so clearly in every act of theirs!"

There were seven men in that room and three women, and they listened to Teddy Hoffman in respectful silence. My father's face was stern and sad as he rose to reply; it was gnarled with heavy lines; the marks of time were upon it and the ravages of struggle. Most curious of all were his keen blue eyes; there was something in

them of a man who has already said farewell to life. Father turned to Hoffman and said in a low, vibrant voice:

"What you say is true. Do you agree, then, that we ought to strike in self-defense at once, now, now before it's too late?"

"Well, no," said Hoffman with some hesitation. "You are always in a hurry, and that is dangerous. If it's going to be self-defense, we must let them fire on us first."

"That's right," said my father ironically. "You train the people for years to lick the boots of their oppressors, then when the night of long knives swoops down on the trusting and unprepared, you expect them to resist effectively."

"If we are compelled to fight, we'll fight," said Hoffman sullenly.

"They will compel us," my father said, "you needn't doubt that for a moment. And the sooner we prepare for the inevitable the better. It's past midnight, and we won't get much further with this. Go back to your places and report, and let's meet with the shop councils at seven tomorrow morning, shall we?"

"Good," said several voices.

The conference broke up; people shook hands all around and said *Freundschaft*; they left the apartment quietly, one at a time, and at last my father and I were alone. He turned out all lights except the lamp on his desk, lit a cigarette and began pacing up and down his study in that shadowed silence. After a while he came up to me, again put his hand on my shoulder and kept it there for some time saying nothing. I knew his heart was full and that he could not find the words to utter his feelings. Strange thoughts began to beat through my head. For some reason, I was seized by a strong desire to ask my father's forgiveness, not for any specific wrong I had ever done him, but in general, perhaps for the things I had left undone, for my failure to fulfill his expectations, for not being what I might have been, for not giving him the love and understanding which he had longed for but never asked and which I was now ready to give him with all my heart and soul. I really can't say what it was, except that it was strong and urgent and seemed absolutely right, and that I could not open my lips to say a single word of it, and that I was profoundly ashamed of my silence and my utter inability to overcome it.

Then my father tousled my hair as if I were a boy again, and laughed his deep warm laughter and said:

"Come, come, Paul! Don't be so gloomy. What have you got to worry about? Let's sit down at the desk where I can see your face, and let's talk a little."

We sat at the desk and talked in the dim light, and the great silence of the city lay around us, and for the first time in years our

minds were as one. We did not say the same things, we neither agreed nor disagreed, we looked at the world from different angles and saw different aspects of it and measured men and events by different standards, but our hearts understood each other deeply because there was in them that love which transcends the words that divide, and because we knew they really desired the same great things for man. We said many things that night, some foolish and some wise; but even when we questioned each other's phrases, premises or conclusions, we grasped at once the meaning that struggled under their dark obscurities toward the light. We said the nineteenth century and everything it stood for was about to die; that some truly great catastrophe brooded over our city, our country, our continent and the world we shared with two billion fellow human beings. We asked each other why men cannot apply the lessons of the past to master the present and govern the future; and why at this terrible moment, when history was writing across all the skies in letters of blood the single word *danger!* so few wanted to read it. We recalled the enormous hopes of the past, the wonderful free social order of which my father's century had dreamed and of which millions were still dreaming, and we tried to gauge the shadows of slavery looming around us.

Then my father brought me down to earth, saying simply:

"Hoffman thinks we can worm out of a clash by another compromise with the oppressor. I don't. Anything may happen in the coming weeks, and there is something I must take care of. Will you help me?"

"I'll do anything I can for you," I said.

He went into the next room and after a few minutes came back with a long envelope which had no writing on it and which was carefully sealed with three large circles of red wax.

"This came to me from Hans Bayer in Paris," he said, tearing the envelope open. "It arrived by an underground courier who gave me the necessary explanations. I'm going to pass them on to you."

He smiled and emptied the envelope on the desk. Nothing came out except a yellow banknote. Father lifted it with his fingers and held it against the light that flooded his desk, and I saw it was only half a banknote, torn across the middle.

"Look at this," said my father, "and commit the serial number to that fantastic memory of yours."

It was a bill of high denomination and came from one of the Balkan countries. The edges were scissored deliberately to form a curious pattern which it would be almost impossible to duplicate, and in the corner was the serial number: Q 16-739.

"Hans Bayer's instructions are as follows," my father said

quietly. "One of our best underground workers is now in Berlin. He has managed to work his way into a rather important post in the ranks of the enemy and they do not suspect him. Occasionally he may be able to come out to report to us. This is the safest city for him to visit. He cannot call on me; I am a marked man. He might be able to contact you at the university without arousing suspicion. If he manages to see you alone where it is safe, he will tell you what he has to tell, and you can relay it to me later."

"Who is this mysterious man?"

"That's just it. I don't know. He will probably invent the name he will give you. There is only one way you can know him for certain. He will have the other half of the bill you are now holding in your hand."

I studied the banknote for a while, and said:

"Then one of these days I am to expect a visit from Mr. Q 16-739?"

"Precisely," said my father. "Are you sure you want to do this?"

"Absolutely sure," I said. "Against the brown menace—anything."

"Very well," he said. "Put that bill in your shoe, and when you get home, hide it where Santa Claus himself couldn't find it."

I took off my right shoe, slipped the torn bill inside and put on the shoe again. I left the house a few minutes later, promising my father to visit him again in a few days. He accompanied me to the door, and there was a strange, pleased smile on his face as he said good night. Then, at the last moment, he leaned over and kissed my forehead.

At home, I studied the torn banknote for a while, and committed the number Q 16-739 to memory. Then I hid the bill in a copy of Sigebert de Gembloux's *De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis*, slipped the book behind a row of forbidding technical volumes on the lowest shelf of one of the bookcases and went to sleep with a clear conscience.

The next day the shooting started. That frightful massacre has become one of the sagas of modern Europe; it has been told in novels, plays, memoirs and histories, told and retold truly and well. For our purpose, doctor, the briefest outline of events will do.

That memorable Monday the Heimwehr in the suburb of Linz attacked labor headquarters at the Hotel Schiff. The workers resisted and a pitched battle raged in the streets of the town. News of the conflict reached Vienna several hours later. It arrived in Floridsdorf at a moment when my father was attending a conference of shop councils which was considering a general strike. Excitement ran

high, and the police added fuel to the flames by choosing this time to make fresh house-to-house searches, seizing weapons in two of the poorer districts and disarming the workers.

At noon the workers replied with a general strike. They sang *'Tis the final conflict, let each stand in his place!* and closed all plants and halted all transport and communication. Teddy Hoffman's crowd ran everything, but my father and his friends participated actively and pressed for militant resistance to the planned assaults of the fascists, aided by the government. The workers employed only peaceable means; the government replied by declaring martial law. It mobilized the police, the gendarmes, the troops and the Heimwehr. Former army officers gaily donned their field uniforms, service belts and revolvers and detrained their troops at Vienna's railway stations. They were happy at last to settle scores with the people. For them the decisive moment had arrived; they had been waiting for it ever since the foundation of the republic.

Early that afternoon, the police began to fire in Meidling. Police cars drew up before the great block of communal apartment houses with their airy balconies and children's playgrounds; troops with field equipment leaped out of military lorries, fired without warning through the windows, took buildings by storm. There was wild panic in the corridors. Doors were splintered, windows were smashed, the wounded cried in mortal agony, terrified mothers crouched trembling to protect their little children against the armed forces of the state. Everyone was astonished beyond words; they had not expected a full, frontal attack of this kind. Defense Corps members of that block were only half armed. They had received no orders to resist, but decided to resist anyway.

The assault was swift and ruthless. In Doebling the police stormed and captured the Karl Marx Court; in Ottakring, the Sandeleiten block of houses and the Workers' Home. Toward evening, stiff resistance by the Defense Corps drove the police out of all the houses. The police chief demanded reinforcements and got them. Against workers, many of them unemployed, armed only with old wartime rifles, a few clips of cartridges, some machine guns, the little chancellor, Major Fey and Prince von Starhemberg hurled the most modern engines of war. Cannon, howitzers, tanks, mine throwers and hand grenades raked with the merciless fire of molten steel those community dwellings of which the people had been so proud as symbols of peaceful social policy. Once artillery demolished the houses, the troops rushed in and there was fierce hand-to-hand fighting in the courtyards and hallways, on every staircase, in every communal kitchen. Workers resisted with primitive, homemade hand grenades; their wives and mothers with kitchen knives and flatirons

Even after the troops captured a building, the resistance did not cease. Several hours later shooting would break out again from a roof, a staircase tower, an open window, and the battle blazed up again across the dead bodies of workers, their wives and their children.

All this time my father remained at his post in Floridsdorf, the Twenty-first District on the left bank of the Danube, a city in itself, connected with other parts of Vienna by two bridges. The strike had stopped the streetcars and cut off the telephones. Here not a single shot was fired until late at night. From the moment the assault began, the police won complete control of the district by dispersing the conference of shop councils where my father was present. Encountering no resistance whatever, the police seized the whole of the Schlögl Court. The people who lived there were paralyzed and depressed by a catastrophe which, in spite of a thousand warnings, they had not expected. My father and his friends spent the night moving swiftly and cautiously around Floridsdorf reorganizing the ranks.

I was at my apartment in Vienna torn by anxiety and unable to move. From my open window I could hear the thunder of cannon across the river, and in the street below the rumble of tanks, but I was helpless. The boulevards had been cleared of civilians, barbed wire had been strung across the strategic sections of the city and it was impossible to cross the heavily guarded bridges to Floridsdorf. What happened there I learned later; now I could only sit by a dead telephone or peer through the night at the beleaguered city, and wonder whether my father was still alive.

All night long the police and the Heimwehr prowled through the streets of Floridsdorf. Everywhere spies and secret agents disguised as strikers were trying to track down the Defense Corps, to delay its arming. My father, Teddy Hoffman and other leaders of the corps were anxious for another kind of delay; they wanted to stave off the clash until they were ready; every defender must be equipped and in his place. Long ago they had worked out a defense plan for this kind of emergency, but that was now useless. Deep in the recesses of a factory, guarded by striking workers, they sat all night devising a new plan to save their homes, their families, everything they had built with so much sacrifice for nearly five decades. At last they had two thousand men under arms. These were to oust the police from Floridsdorf, storm across the bridges and engage the troops in the center of the city.

The following morning I rose early and walked toward the university. It was cold and the snow-filled streets were empty except for marching troops, police patrols and Heimwehr men who con-

trolled the area. In the distance you could hear the roar of guns; somewhere the fight was still raging. At the café where I had a cup of coffee the radio croaked hoarsely a government announcement: the authorities had the situation well in hand; the attempt of criminal elements to unleash civil war had been foiled by the unanimous patriotism of a united nation; the Defense Corps had been abandoned by its cowardly leaders; only small insignificant groups were still resisting, despite their utterly hopeless situation; the attempt at a general strike had failed completely; the state railways were running on time; the streetcars would resume service immediately; captured rebels were now in the hands of the courts-martial; the government was determined to establish order by every means at its disposal.

Fraud, the Siamese twin of force.

Would the men of Floridsdorf really come storming across the bridge?

I walked to the Ring. Barbed wire barred my way at the Schotten Gate. I followed a small group of civilians who went through a narrow passage under police supervision. Near the university the street was jammed with all kinds of vehicles for hire—cabs, automobiles, trucks. At every corner the ambulances came crowding up, and along every street there rolled the rhythmic tramp of troops marching by with machine guns and mine throwers. Most stores were closed, the shutters down. The shooting sounded nearer now; orange flashes of fire seared the sky; the earth trembled. Through the house windows peered pale faces; small groups of people gathered along the curbs in silence.

I had suspended my classes for the duration. By a queer coincidence, forbidden in fiction but frequent in life, I was scheduled to lecture on the Gracchi, to describe how the armed Optimates massacred the defenseless Populares on Forum Hill because the people wanted a decent agrarian law. That could wait. The story would always be there, a work of art, complete, instructive, ignored. I had to walk the winter streets now, waiting.

When would the men of Floridsdorf come storming across the bridge?

They never came. A direct hit by artillery fire demolished the great tower of the Schlinger Court where the workers had defended themselves with machine guns. The men and women held out as long as they could, fighting for every stairway, every corridor and every room until dusk.

They built a barricade in the streets of Floridsdorf; threw up paving stones, mattresses, sand, overturned snowplows; and for hours awaited the enemy. Snow fell. Now and then a machine gun rattled

from the Workers' Home or the railway station; occasionally a cannon boomed from the west bank of the river. Otherwise a terrible, deadly stillness hushed the district.

The men from Floridsdorf could not come.

I went home and listened to the dull roar of the guns in the distance and bit my lip wondering about my father. Four days and four nights the war against the people raged without mercy, and the bodies of men, women and children filled the courtyards and corridors of shattered communal houses. The slaughter of the innocents raged in other towns, too—Steyr, Bruck-am-Mur, Eggenberg, Kapfenberg, Judenburg, Wilhelmsberg, Traisental, Woengl, Hearing—names burned into our memory as deeply as those of Madrid, Barcelona and Bruneti later.

And now the little chancellor's lie became true. Artillery won the war against the people and for the government which proudly called itself "Christian, German and corporative." The defeated lay prone by thousands writhing in their wounds and by thousands on the floors of the prisons and concentration camps; and their leaders were sent walking or were carried on stretchers to the gallows; or they were arrested in their trade-union offices, at their desks in the Town Hall, yes, even those who had not, as they should have, taken part in the people's resistance. And many who escaped machine-gun fire, jail and the hangman's noose slipped out of the city at night, crawling through pipe lines or swimming the Danube, and fled abroad. All socialist officials, elected by the people according to law, were now deposed in violation of the law; party premises and labor buildings were seized, all remaining papers suppressed. The guardians of the sacred right of property seized and confiscated the communal property of the people. They arrested seventy-year-old Mayor Karl Seitz, who had once tried to curb the just wrath of the people on the Schmerlingplatz; and the old man cried: "I refuse to leave my office! Two-thirds of Vienna's people sent me here! I will yield to no violation of the Constitution!"—and they carried him off to the big gray prison. The triumphant reaction installed its own man in the Town Hall, and he ruled with an iron hand. No more popular nonsense, no more municipal houses, schools, playgrounds! Out with the socialists, in with the clerical climbers! All labor organizations were dissolved, even their athletic clubs, temperance leagues and religious societies. Black silent peace lay like a pall over our city, the peace of the tombs, and there was great rejoicing in the Schwarzenbergplatz and that was the end of the Third Austria.

The night the firing ceased and the siege was lifted, I took the Stephansplatz bus across the bridge to Floridsdorf and went through

the dark, ominous stillness of patrolled streets to my father's house. Had he escaped? Was he wounded, imprisoned, hanged? The gate to the wide courtyard was closed and heavily guarded. Through the bars I could see the smashed balconies, the tower crumpled by artillery fire, the broken windows. I could also see five or six canvas-covered bodies on the frozen ground. The officer in charge examined my identification papers. They were in good order.

"What do you want?" he demanded.

"To find out about my father. Arthur Schuman. He lives here."

"He doesn't live here any more." The officer grinned. "He's lying there in the snow with the other dead dogs."

The world crashed. Time ceased. The wild roar of waves surged through my brain, crying hopelessly, and my heart died within me utterly beyond resurrection.

"I insist upon seeing him," I heard a strained voice saying from a great distance, and was shocked to discover it was my own.

"Nobody can come in till further orders."

"I want to do what must be done."

"Sorry. You'll have to wait."

An hour later I realized I was wandering through the streets of Vienna, tears streaming down my face. They had not come for years, and now they could not stop. It was all untrue, I had dreamed it, he was not dead, he could not be. I would find him waiting for me at my rooms, and he would smile at me and shake his fine, white head and ask me why I was so gloomy, and I would tell him it was because of a queer nightmare and we would both laugh and go to a café together and talk about the great hopes of the world, which would be alive and vibrant like himself forever and ever.

I did not go home. I was afraid of the emptiness that would overwhelm me there. Everything was empty, the life was drained out of all things; the black desert of death—implacable, irrevocable, absolute—surrounded the earth upon which I moved, a lost, disconsolate atom. I did not want to call anybody, to see friends, to hear the generous words which can alter nothing and restore nothing; I wanted to be alone with the thought of him and the image of his gaunt, smiling face which looked at me, deathless and alight with hope, from every street and every spire that filled the blue and frozen sky of night. And following that image I wandered the streets of the city till dawn.

Later that week the official order came, and I went with Uncle Peter and Siegfried Gross to get him. Please don't ask me to recall the last sight of him disfigured by the enemy's hand grenades. We buried him next to my mother. Despite the prevailing terror, many of his friends had the courage to come. They bared their heads in

the chill sunlight that fell upon the red-draped coffin in the open grave and chanted their funeral march and listened in silent love as one of their own paid tribute to him who had died fighting, rifle in hand, on the stairways of his home. But I could not believe it even then. I thought he listened to every word, that my mother smiled her pride to him, that I was not the captive of the most bitter loneliness on the face of the earth, that I had not also ended a complete life which could never possibly return.

11

*Life, she is over there, passionate and fecund:
Gallop madly, she eats up the great highways
of the world;
Amid the tumult and the dust,
The strong cling to her mane.*

—Les visages de la vie.

DEATH WHICH SEPARATES US from the dead reunites us intensely for a moment with the living. The news of the massacre spreading everywhere brought consolations from every corner of the globe. Many of these came from men and women I had never met and never heard of, admirers of my father, sympathizers with the things nearest his heart while it beat, themselves beating onward now that it was still. Kurt wrote from Paris a letter full of grief and rage; and Hans Bayer, assuming quite truly that he could address me as a stranger without being wholly so, wrote in effect: he has fought a good fight, he has finished his course, he has kept the faith. Siegfried, Uncle Peter, Professor Gross, each in his own way, was exceptionally kind; and Helga insisted that I come to her soirées where the presence of crowds might assuage despair. From New York Russell Hague sent me a cable of condolence, followed by a longer one boiling with alarm and combat. There goes democracy in Austria, he said, and one more European state rolls down the precipice. This episode confirmed a plan which had been maturing in his mind for some time; he was coming across the Atlantic at once.

But when death plunges its claws into our hearts and wrings them to the last turn, where shall we flee? The road back is closed forever, the road ahead is not yet opened; and there is only the dark, insecure refuge of our own souls. From dawn to dusk I moved in a nightmare that made me long for sleep; and at night I longed for daybreak that I might escape the shadowy emblems of grief which deciphered themselves even in my dreams. Everything seemed remote, unreal, wrapped in a deep red fog of uncertainty, fear and doubt; and the greatest of these was doubt.

It became increasingly difficult to teach. My colleagues, the ad-

ministrators, the students at the university irritated me with their sense of security which seemed as absurd as it was false. Upon what did they base their unquestioned faith, their fantastic hope in the future? Upon nothing more substantial than things learned almost wholly from books; a belief in the power of human reason to illumine the nature of things, and a belief in the power of man's moral sense to overcome evil and establish good.

Those ideas were old, old as the hills that looked down upon the carnage of Floridsdorf, old as Hammurabi, Isaiah, Plato and Lucretius, oh, far far older than Dante, Milton, Goethe and Shelley! We were just what a great Viennese novelist said we were: sleep-walkers in the realm of contemporary reality, drugged with the opium of dreams, unaware that they were dreams and past beyond recall. Yes, people all around me sometimes said man was an irrational animal and the moral sense a myth, and we even taught these ultra-ultramodern ideas in our classes; but we did not really believe them, we did not even comprehend events around us in the light of these ideas.

But the bitterness was there. I would lie in my study surrounded by the utter darkness of night and hug to my memory that epitaph which broke from Goethe's heart in a moment of despair: After brief tumult, fame lies down to rest; forgotten is the hero like the slave; the greatest king must close his eyes at last, for every dog to piss upon his grave.

It was useless to seek anodynes in the sensual glory of things; wine, music, women, dances, parties seemed as unreal as the faith we apprehend only in wordless feeling or unfeeling words. At Helga's I had a particularly bad time of it. I would watch her moving among her guests, radiant and aloof, and think: she has known me all these years, yet hardly understands me at all, and I understand her even less after all these years. I am a myth to her and she to me; her picture of what I am does not at all coincide with what I know to be true of myself, unless it is I who suffer from illusions. Helga is someone from the past with whom I have never come to terms and never understood, who follows me on through the years like an unresolved dream of childhood, full of longing, fear and ambiguity. And if we really do not know our closest friends, those we have liked from early youth and see so frequently in our manhood, what chance have we of knowing historic figures whom we have never met, of whom we have nothing more than rumor diluted by time, whom we see only through mirrors that reflect mirrors that reflect distorted images in a river flowing endlessly?

Yet here, at least, some truth is possible; we can talk of the

past with a certain amount of freedom and can compare the estimates of those who are its contemporaries. But what of the historic figures of our own time, shrouded in mystery, about whom one dares not even make honest guesses for fear of consequences? There was a public figure like Helga's husband, for instance, with whom you talked so often under his own roof that when anyone asked you, "Do you know him?" you answered with absolute confidence, "Of course!" Who would have guessed that for the sake of the brown menace he was supporting, Ritter would cynically repudiate the creed into which he was born and which, to the very last moment of betrayal, he had professed to believe? Yet here he was in our city, on a flying trip from his new headquarters in Berlin, performing a most peculiar mission. He went to his priest and told him point-blank that the interests of his business required him to leave the church; as an accredited contractor to the masters of the brown regime, he owed it to himself and his investments to recant the faith.

When the news of this brazen act reached my uncle, he buttonholed Ritter at one of his parties and demanded an explanation. I was one of the small group of guests that overheard their strange dialogue. Shrewd and suave as usual, Ritter evaded the issue and talked about something else as if it were a genuine clarification of everything he did.

"I had a long talk with the Fuehrer," Ritter told Uncle Peter, "and he assured me in so many words that Austria would fall into his lap like a rotten apple. This republic is a corpse. It can have a new life only as part of the Third Reich."

"You may have a fine life under the Reich," I said, "but what about the rest of us?"

"I'm not so sure that even Herr Ritter will have a fine life under the brown grandees," Uncle Peter said.

"What do you think will happen to me?" said Ritter, smiling.

"I can't quite envision the details," Uncle Peter replied. "But as I listen to you cheering the Fuehrer, it reminds me of a famous Roman proverb."

"Volenti non fit injuria," I volunteered.

"That's it," said Uncle Peter.

"Which means?" Ritter asked, raising his eyebrows ironically.

"Which means," Uncle Peter explained, "that he who wishes a thing must not complain when he gets it."

When Helga learned of this conversation later in the evening, she retired to her room and wept for a long time. To all the other objections against Ritter which she had developed in the course of time, there was now added the feeling that he had sold his God and

his country to a terrible foe. However, what impressed me most about this episode was something else. Despite his cynical conduct, Ritter was not generally treated as a traitor; on the contrary, he was received in the best circles as usual, and men in the highest authority fawned on him as a link with the great power to the north. Shortly afterward, when he left for Berlin, several topflight government officials saw him off at the railway station.

Everybody was keenly interested in the north; the ruthless, distorted personalities whom the counterrebellion had thrown up from the lowest abysses to the crest of power became the fascinating topics of conversation nearly everywhere. Among other things, this made it possible for many people to ignore the horrors around them. The victims of the massacre at the communal houses were still being buried and their leaders were still being hanged and the echoes of the civil war were still fresh on the streets of the city; but most nice people wanted to forget the whole thing as soon as possible. When Uncle Peter said the massacre was "unfortunate and inevitable," he voiced the prevailing attitude of the privileged; and obviously there was as little use in crying over spilt blood as over spilt milk.

There was one man, however, who was intensely interested in all that happened, and who wanted the whole world to know the true story. I received a wire from Paris saying that an old friend of mine was flying to Vienna the following day and would I meet him at the airport, signed Russell Hague.

Seeing him for the first time in so many years—tall, muscular, energetic—gave me my first relief from the paralyzing doubts of the preceding fortnight. We had been corresponding regularly for the past decade, and he had told me a great deal about his life and thought. I knew about his enthusiasm for the new trends in America emanating from the White House, and about his deep concern for the new trends in Europe emanating from the Wilhelmstrasse. He had even written me several times that he planned to make his headquarters on the Continent for a while in order to watch its development at close range. Now he had really come; and all he would say in explanation was that an American correspondent must work on a schedule that is subject to change without notice. He had originally wanted to go straight from New York to Berlin, where he was opening a news syndicate; but when the story of the communal houses came through, he decided to see Vienna first, to say hello to me for pleasure and to interview our statesmen for business.

"My motto has always been," he said, "pleasure before business."

As a matter of fact, that wasn't true. In the taxi which took us from the airport to the Hotel Imperial, where Hague had reserved a suite for himself, I had a chance to see how serious he had become since our student days in Paris. He had put on at least thirty pounds; his face had lost a little of its hawklike look in the ruddy color and round jowl that mark a man who knows and enjoys good living; and his speech was full of lively humor and sly understatement. But underneath that jovial, energetic exterior, his mind persistently hewed away at the shapeless rocks of surface experience until it had carved out essential substance and intelligible form. I was astonished at how well he understood Europe, and impressed by the alert sense whereby he anticipated events that had not yet occurred but which he insisted were "on the cards."

We dined together the day of his arrival and spent the evening at a café talking over old times a little and all possible futures a great deal. Hague asked many questions about my father, the manner of whose death shocked him profoundly, and wanted to know what his opinion had been of the fascist dictators. I tried my best to explain the theory that these latter-day despots were the product of economic, historical, social and political forces which required a Caesar regardless of his name or personal qualities. Hague laughed and said that to live in Vienna without being influenced by Freud was like visiting Egypt without seeing the Pyramids. For his money, he said, every modern Caesar was a pathological case corresponding to the pathological state of modern society. To him, the Italian boss represented the man's revolt against the poverty, misery, frustration and loneliness of the boy. The dictator, said Hague, is one who is so humiliated in his youth that he can compensate for his early agonies only by dominating the society which had inspired him with so much envy and hatred. So, too, he looked upon the brown monster of the north as a man driven to furious lust for blood and plunder by his unhappy, twisted youth; he was a political paranoiac who required endless public acclaim as balm to his endlessly injured mind; yet the psychic illness was so profound, so far gone, that no amount of power in the world could compensate or cure it.

Hague said all this with that humorous twinkle which often appeared in his eye when he was in absolute earnest but wanted to give you a chance not to take any of it seriously without offending him. Then I realized that he told me this partly to make me forget my troubles; for now he leaned across the café table and said, smiling:

"But I suppose you have some fancy historical parallel for all this madness around us. Who has replaced old Condorcet in your affections, Paul?"

The mention of Condorcet acted as a strange solvent. The door of the past was not really closed; Hague's casual remark had just opened it wide upon the vistas of Paris, the Rue Saint-Honoré, Fontainebleau, and for the first time in years the lovely face of Babette emerged out of the black fog which obscured the time that could never return. I thought of that rainy afternoon when I had told her that I would never be able to think of Condorcet without thinking of her in Paris. I had thought of neither until now, when Hague—perhaps because the death of my father had unconsciously reminded him of the loss of his own while he was still in Paris—had invoked the memory of a historical fable which had meant so much to me then and so little to me in all the succeeding years. And for a moment the memory of Babette was intense, full of new life, like a great and wonderful resurrection, and through my mind there swept those French lines I had once read to her from a favorite poet: Our soul, exalted, as it were, in this awakening, devotes itself to celebrating all that loves; magnifying love for love's own sake, and to cherishing divinely, with a mad longing, the whole world that is summed up in us.

"Nobody has replaced Condorcet in my heart," I said, with deliberate attempt at a condensed image that would convey two meanings at once. "I give general courses in which the lone historical figure drowns in the vast sea of generalization. But what you say is very interesting, and if you want to play the old intellectual games of our youth, I will add only this: The Roman Caesars bolstered their temporal power by posing as gods. Christianity robbed them of this pose. It divided the world into the realm temporal and the realm spiritual. The Jews initiated that idea. Their prophets could always rebuke their kings in the name of a Being who was greater than any of us singly and all of us put together. Perhaps this extraordinary contribution is one of the causes of that insane prejudice from which they have suffered for two millennia, who knows? Christianity carried that idea into the Western world to the point where Napoleon lamented that he could not declare himself a god because it would be precisely the illiterate, devout peasants who would ridicule him. Black and brown dictators have succeeded where Bonaparte failed; they have set themselves up not only as almighty temporal rulers, but also as divinities."

We both laughed at that for some reason, and Hague said:

"Come on, Paul! That's a literary exaggeration, and you know it. But this is like the old days, and we ought to celebrate our reunion in Vienna appropriately."

He ordered a bottle of wine, and after the second glass I felt indeed as if we were back in the old days. But I had no desire to

relieve them; I rather wanted to find my roots there, so that I might move forward to a new life based upon genuine spiritual sources.

"Okay," Hague said, after we had each drunk several glasses of wine. "What about the dictator as divinity?"

"Do you know," I said, "how God was described in the Middle Ages? *Ens a se extra et supra omne genus, necessarium, unum, infinite, perfectum, simplex, immutabile, immensum, eternum, intelligens*. Now consider the myth which your modern Caesar creates about himself among his passionate, adoring devotees. Isn't the dictator a being apart from and above all other species? Isn't he the necessary product of all preceding history? Isn't he unique, the one and only possible Leader, impossible to equal, impossible to replace? Isn't he infinite, making his power felt everywhere through his spies, storm troopers and propagandists? And unless you want to land in a concentration camp, would you doubt that he is perfect? Yet, with all these sublime attributes which set him up on the very apex of all creation, isn't he also simple, wearing nothing but an old tan raincoat, eating vegetables, drinking milk and chastely renouncing the pleasures of Bacchus and Venus? Does he not even think like the man in the street? And note how immutable he is! His whole life is at the service of a fixed idea which never falters, never changes, never yields, no matter how contradictory his words and actions may appear to bigoted minds infected with the wrong blood or the wrong ideas. Then, too, see how immense he is! See his mighty figure, transfigured by balconies and floodlights, towering above everything and everyone; behold it fill every nook and crevice of the land so that you cannot think, act or breathe without feeling his awful presence. Again, isn't he also eternal, promising to make men in his image for the next thousand years, a millennium no less? And finally, will anyone living in his world dare to question that he is the greatest intelligence in all of recorded history? In short, your modern Caesar is the divinity of the Gothic scholastics, a god without mercy or love, the medieval word become twentieth century flesh."

"Flesh and blood," Hague said.

"Anyway," I said, "the brown Caesar at last settles a great quest. Do you know Heine's famous poetic satire in which King Solomon and Queen Balkis ask each other riddles?"

"I haven't read Heine since Jeffries knocked out Fitzsimmons," said Hague.

"In that poem," I said, "Solomon asks the following riddle: who is the greatest scoundrel among all the German scoundrels? Balkis sends messengers to all parts of Germany for an answer; but every time she tells Solomon she has located the greatest of all

German scoundrels, the king replies: but, child! there is a worse one still! The poet then explains a peculiar trait of our northern neighbor. As often as we imagine we have discovered her most despicable character, there pops up one still more despicable. But our age is truly fortunate. The climax has been reached. The greatest scoundrel among all the German scoundrels has appeared at last!"

"Sure," said Hague dryly, "and they had to import him from Vienna."

We both laughed at that. Then we finished the bottle of wine and I accompanied Hague to the door of the Imperial. We said good night several times, and he insisted he wanted to look over the wreckage in Floridsdorf and talk with some of the victims. I promised to make the necessary arrangements for him.

But he never got around to it. For the next seventy-two hours he ran around official buildings breaking down the red tape, dilatory charm and time-devouring unkept promises of Vienna until he had interviewed everybody of importance from Major Fey to the little chancellor. Hague's presence was felt everywhere in the capital, and there was a great deal of talk about him. Everyone was impressed by his money, his power and his influence both at home and abroad. Naturally, Helga tried to capture the American lion for one of her parties, and failed. He told me later he had no time for vultures, but never amplified the phrase.

During his swift campaign for information, Hague kept in touch with me by telephone. He was likely to ring me at any hour of the day or night, at the university or at home, for a name, an address, a contact or a clue. This gave me the sense of being part of the world again, a guest permitted to stand in the vestibule of its turbulent activities. At the end of what he called his "three-day circus," Hague stayed up all night in his hotel room, smoking countless cigarettes and typing out a long story till dawn for his papers in America. Later I had breakfast with him at the Imperial and took him down to the airport from which he was going to fly to Berlin; and it was then that he said, snapping his fingers in chagrin:

"Gosh, I'm a dog! I forgot all about those communal houses. That story must be told." An idea lit his eyes and he added: "Tell you what I'll do. I've got a bright little correspondent in London who can do this story like nobody's business. The moment I land, I'll airmail instructions for her to come here and look you up. Her name is Margaret Bishop, and she's okay. She writes for the British labor papers, too, so we can kill two birds with one story."

The motors of the plane began to roar and Hague started for the portable steps.

"So long, Paul," he said from the doorway of the plane. "Take

good care of yourself and see that Miss Bishop gets a good translator. My guess is you'll want to do it yourself." He put both his hands on my shoulders and said with that softness which in a man like him is always unexpected and always there under the surface: "I know it's been tough for you. Keep that chin up."

He slapped me on the back, turned away abruptly and entered the plane. The huge aluminum bird slanted upward slowly into the crisp winter air, dipped into a horizontal position, gathered speed from its roaring motors and vanished into the remote horizons of the sky.

I went on to the university, lectured absent-mindedly on fourth century Christianity to one class, the controversy between St. Bernard and Abélard to another, and the Metternich era to a third and went home. My rooms were deadly still, and for the first time in years I heard the ticking of the clock which hitherto had represented only the silent face of time. Now its voice assailed my ears, monotonous, insistent, without respite and without mercy, saying that time was no abstract concept but almost a physical thing, stretching endlessly behind us and before us only as a race, but for each of us as a person dying every moment of the day, dying endlessly beyond recall, diminishing until at last we reach the point of extinction. Then, with images as diverse as those of my father and Hague dashing themselves to fragments against my brain, I thought how the little span of time allotted to us derives every bit of its meaning or its emptiness solely from the way we employ it; whether we fill it with creation or sterility, whether we use it to embrace life with all the ardor of our being or flee from it with all the terror of a frightened soul; and the great Flemish poet's lines confronted my heart like a stark, relentless accusation: I was a coward: I fled from the world in my vain pride: beneath the canopy of night I raised the golden marbles of a hostile science.

A fortnight later I was teaching my last class of the day when a student brought me word that a Miss Bishop was waiting in my office. The name meant nothing to me, and I must have kept her waiting a good half hour before showing up. When I opened the door of my office, I found her sitting at my desk, smoking a cigarette and reading one of my books. She had placed her hat on a chair, and I noticed how dark and well-kept her hair was. As I entered, she rose and introduced herself in succinct English phrases.

"I'm Margaret Bishop," she said, putting out her hand to shake mine in the postwar style of the emancipated woman. "I have a letter from Russell Hague. I suppose he told you about the story he wants me to do?"

She was several inches shorter than I, trim, well-built, full of energy; and as she spoke her wide gray eyes smiled frankly and confidently.

"Yes," I said. "I am to take you to Floridsdorf."

In those days, my English was derived mainly from books, and I'm afraid that my reply sounded even more awkward than it does now transformed by time, memory and longer familiarity with the language.

"That's very kind of you," she said.

Her voice was low and firm, and her English accent seemed to caress not only the words it uttered but the mind to which they were addressed. A strange sense of security came over me, a mild form of madness which assured me I had just recovered a long lost friend. How can one explain these things? From this moment it was impossible for me to remember the time I had not known her.

"Where do you plan to stay?" I asked.

"Hague recommended the Imperial."

"I'll take you there," I said. "You can wash up from your journey and we can make plans afterward. Which way did you come?"

"Via Berlin," she said. "Hague gave me enough assignments to keep me busy for life. What's more, I bring the victims relief money from the Labor party."

She laughed gaily, and now for the first time I dared look at all of her face. It was not romantically beautiful, the way Babette's face had seemed to me in those far-off days when all the world was full of glamour. It was a rather simple face, with its wide gray eyes and straight nose and full, kind mouth; but it was suffused with a strange, vivid light which seemed to be looking for something with an absolute certainty that it was there, though as yet undiscovered. And it was this light, perhaps, and the vague feelings it aroused in me that gave our exchange of commonplace amenities such an air of profound importance.

Yet I had only to look at her gray eyes again to see that for her the amenities *were* commonplace, that nothing of any importance whatever was taking place at that moment for her, that my shattered feelings were reintegrating themselves around a mirage. And as soon as I realized that she was not aware of my existence, except as a college professor who might help her in the Floridsdorf assignment, my heart leaped up from its prison floor and began to beat furiously against the bars for release. It did not yet ask for love; it did ask for action. It surged forward out of the grave of isolation and despair, and demanded to embrace the real world, to do the things I had neglected to do, at least to stand by the side of

this woman from another country as she aided the victims of wanton carnage in my own whom I had so inhumanly neglected.

I took her first to the Imperial and waited in the lobby for an hour while she got ready. Then we picked up the Stephansplatz bus to Floridsdorf. Miss Bishop did not waste a minute, I noticed, but wanted to get to work at once. She sat beside me quite impersonally as we bumped along the cobblestones toward the bridge that spanned the Danube; and she talked about herself rather impersonally, too, in that curious way English and American women have.

"I'm here as an observer," she said. "I'm also here as a liberal with strong labor sympathies. And that's the kind of observer I'm going to be. My observations will also be colored by the fact that I am an Englishwoman twenty-seven years old who is an amateur sociologist, an amateur historian and a professional journalist; that is, a typical collector of odds and ends. So you see, Professor Schuman, I'm not going to be really objective, but who is?"

"Nobody, Miss Bishop," I said, looking at her simple, clear, smiling face; but I was thinking something else.

What she had just said confirmed my wild hope that she was no stranger to me, that a million strands connected our souls long before we had met. For see, my heart said to me joyously through its prison bars, she is not only young and lovely and lovable; she knows your friends and she is going to the friends of your father; she is already part of your world; and best of all, she has just told you that she sees that world from the same vantage point as yourself; she cares for the same things; she is an amateur in that which is your lifework; what you think and say and do cannot be alien to her; she loves the things you love; both of you speak the same language and perhaps you have both thought the same thoughts.

"You are an amateur historian?" I said.

"Oh, very much of an amateur!" Miss Bishop laughed. "I'm afraid I made it sound more serious than it really is. I merely like to read history."

"May I ask what you were reading when I found you in my office?"

Our bus was rolling past tenements, little stores, factories and empty lots.

"I hope you won't mind," she said. "I was reading your book on Condorcet."

"Did you know who Condorcet was?"

"Of course! Who doesn't?"

"Ah!" I said.

"Why do you say *Ah!* in that funny way, Professor Schuman?"

"I am only joking," I said, and in spite of myself began to

laugh heartily. She looked at me sharply, unable to grasp the joke, and changed the subject.

"What a poor town Vienna is," she said. "It has much less traffic than London or Paris, and I notice that nobody here is ever in a hurry."

When we entered the gate which led to the courtyard of my father's house, Miss Bishop turned pale. The shattered balconies, windows and towers stood unrepaired, a charred monument to the innocent dead. Silently we climbed the stairs along which the defenders had fought to the last, and knocked at a door. It opened halfway, and a frightened old woman with lumps on her face peeped out.

"Freundschaft und Freiheit!" I said to the old woman. "Please do not be afraid. This lady is an English journalist who brings you help from the Labor party."

The old woman opened the door and let us in. At a broken table inside the house, still a scene of havoc, sat a young woman and an old man. They looked at us with fear and suspicion, but as soon as Miss Bishop began speaking, the warm, sincere solicitude and comradeship of her voice broke through the alien tongue and reassured them even before I translated her words. She handed them twenty schillings in the name of the Labor party of her country. The young woman took it in silence and pressed it to her breast; the old woman kissed Miss Bishop's hand with tears in her eyes, saying simply:

"My son was killed defending this house."

We spent the whole afternoon visiting victims of the great massacre, and everywhere it was the same—smashed roofs, broken glass, walls pitted with bullet holes. Everywhere we heard dark details of those four sanguinary days; and everywhere men, women and children looked sick, pale, shocked, frightened; and everywhere Miss Bishop won their hearts and their trust, and roused their hopes in life, and made them glad because some of their friends across the turbulent Channel had not forgotten them.

One woman wept over the relief money Miss Bishop gave her and said:

"Oh, it's not only the money, but to think we are not alone! We thought no one knew . . ."

"Everybody will know," Miss Bishop assured her, and when she left she said, as she now said on leaving all those wrecked, poverty-stricken houses: "Freundschaft und Freiheit!"

That evening, on the way back to the center of the city, Miss Bishop leaned against me in the swaying bus, and her face was tired from the ordeal. Her body ached with the fatigue of count-

less stairs, and her mind with the shock of what she had seen and heard. She smiled a pale smile and said:

"Everybody at home told me the Austrians would never be as brutal as the Germans. Did you notice that story of how Prince von Starhemberg viewed the corpses in the Goethehof washhouse and said: *Far too few shot*? But in conflicts like these, it's always the same, isn't it?"

"From time immemorial," I said.

"It's frightful," she said. "I'm very depressed; but I'm happy, too. When I think how those people defended the last outposts of their liberty, I know for certain that everything is worth while, that there is meaning in events, that there is sense and beauty even in the most terrible aspects of history. Do you understand what I mean, Professor Schuman? You don't think me balmy, do you?"

"Not at all, Miss Bishop," I said, smiling. "I think I understand just what you mean."

"Thank you. I knew you would," she said, and for the first time her smile was not wholly impersonal.

We were now at the door of the Imperial and I saw she could hardly stand on her feet.

"You must be very tired," I said.

"I am tired."

"Let me take you to dinner, then, and you can relax."

"No, no," she said. "I've got to put all these impressions down on paper before they evaporate. When my job is done and I've mailed all my stories, you may take me to dinner."

"Is that a promise, Miss Bishop?"

"Yes, on one condition."

"Any condition you like," I said.

"Please call me Peggy."

"Well," I said, "that's a very onerous condition indeed, and I wouldn't think of accepting it without imposing equally heavy terms."

"Very well, Paul," she said, and we both laughed and our eyes sent across the boundaries of the impersonal the first signal of mutual recognition.

That night I slept a long, peaceful, unbroken sleep; and when I awoke in the sunlight that came pouring through my window with the first intimations of spring, I found I had been thinking of Peggy long before I had opened my eyes.

BOOK THREE

Dost thou still retain thine integrity?
—*The Book of Job.*

1

*She is mine own,
And I as rich in having such a jewel
As twenty seas, if all their sand were pearl,
The water nectar, and the rocks pure gold.
—The Two Gentlemen of Verona.*

WE SAW EACH OTHER every day. Peggy usually spent the morning writing dispatches to her home offices in London and New York; in the afternoon, after my classes were over, I would pick her up at the Imperial and we would go to Floridsdorf, Ottakring and other parts of the city to gather details of the conflict and bring relief to the victims.

Peggy followed the story with an intensity that left room for nothing else; it absorbed all her energy, thought and feeling, and this often irritated me. Her work sometimes appeared to be a fierce dragon devouring all that was human in her; then I would be ashamed of the fantasy, for I realized I was using the word *human* in a restricted, jealous sense and resented that what was really human and unselfish in her nature gave itself without stint and reserve to many people who needed her at the expense of the attention which I now wanted more than anything in the world as an exclusive possession. We were always with people, never alone. Sometimes I would bring her to her hotel room and find five or six friends waiting for her. She would invite us all in, feed us bread, chocolate and oranges, and let us talk as long and as loud as we wanted to while she sat at her dresser banging a portable typewriter, describing the civil war, the arrests, imprisonments and executions.

She had her own irritations, of course, but these alas! had nothing to do with me. She was furious because her stories were buried on the back pages or not published at all. The world was moving fast and becoming callous; one tragedy rapidly crowded its predecessor out of the headlines; the destruction of the communal houses was no longer news—therefore, by twentieth century standards, no longer tragedy. And the story which Peggy had thought would shock the conscience of the world did not even reach

its ears now. What worried her, too, was that no more relief money was coming from the English labor movement at the very time when the German Nazis were pouring funds and propaganda into our country.

"It's too late," she said to me one night, as I took her back from Ottakring to the Imperial. "Nowadays democratic Europe does everything too late. That tardiness may crush her."

But she kept working with extraordinary energy and loyalty at her task until it was completed, and in the course of it surprised me by the range of her sympathies. She not only won the devoted comradeship of many of my father's old friends, but somehow got Helga to join a committee distributing relief to the victims of the massacre. It turned out that at one of those innumerable luncheons which Peggy attended as part of her work, she had met the countess. Now the most spoiled, self-centered woman in Vienna was helping people whom she had always despised and ignored, and whom she now for the first time in her life pitied. By the time Peggy told me this she was already aware that I had known Helga for years. I expressed some surprise at this strange conversion to good deeds.

"There is so much good in the worst of us," Peggy quoted an English writer. I replied by citing an adage from my own country about young sinners who become old saints, and she said: "Nonsense! Helga has probably been waiting for years to do something useful. Besides, I satisfy her snobbism perfectly." She leaned over (how fragrant her body was!) and stage-whispered in my ear: "Remember, I have an English passport!"

She even got Helga to aid her in a plan to move some of the Floridsdorf children whose fathers had been killed to other countries where they would be properly cared for; but the plan came to nothing, thanks to the interference of some of the hierarchs. We appealed to Uncle Peter, but he said he was powerless in the matter. This brought a sniff from Peggy, whose family had the kirk behind it for generations and still remembered that John Knox had been beaten up in the galleys. While she herself was "not any kind of a deist," as she put it, she thought it shameful the way the hierarchy interfered in the politics of my country; and she was not above saying that Uncle Peter wouldn't do anything to help socialist children if he could.

At last Peggy had gone as far as possible with her job here. She had visited all the places and sent all the stories she could, and she was dead tired. There were red spots in her eyes, strained by constant writing; her feet were blistered from climbing up and down countless stairs; and she had begun to cough her profound fatigue from a throat which for weeks had been asking questions without

end and speaking words of comfort and courage. It was time for her to return to London, and I found myself with a sinking heart assisting her in all the necessary preparations. The thought of her leaving Vienna appalled me. Yet I could not say this to her; I was afraid that once these words escaped me, I would say much more, and I was not quite sure what I wanted to say to her.

But there was time for that. She said she would keep her promise to dine with me, and we agreed to meet in a little Hungarian restaurant on the day of her departure. We would arrive there after three, when my classes were over, and stay there as near as possible to six o'clock, when her train left. I looked forward to this farewell party so keenly that I went to the restaurant the night before, discussed special dishes with the cook and special brands of Szuerke Baràt with the headwaiter, and asked the swarthy gypsy violinist to play for us *If I were rich, you would not have to walk.*

At the appointed time, I rushed by taxi from the university to the restaurant. It was a bright March afternoon, and the Vienna skies were lucid with early spring. How marvelous everything looks at that time of year, and what gay faces now passed by along the boulevards!

The headwaiter had done a splendid job. There were flowers on the table, as I had ordered; the wine was already chilling in an ice pail on the floor under the red-checkered tablecloth; and the gypsy orchestra bowed and smiled as I took my seat. Peggy would be here at any moment; we would drink and laugh and listen to the violins and the cymbalon serenading her; I would ask her a thousand questions about herself and her life in England; then I would tell her of my decision. Yes, this coming June, the day my vacation began, I would go to London for the summer; and, with her permission, would call on her there, every day, if she would let me.

It was getting late. Peggy was undoubtedly tied up in some of our charming Viennese red tape, waiting to get her baggage done or her passport stamped. There was still time.

Yes, London would be lots of fun. We would go to teas which I would be able to endure because she was there, and to cricket matches which she would explain to me, and to the House of Commons and the offices of the great newspapers and the British Museum, and Transport House, and the university and factory towns; and after I had seen through her eyes a great country which was all the more wonderful because it was hers, we would come back to London, and row along the Thames in Kew; and lying on the grass in Richmond Downs, looking up at England's bright blue summer skies, I would tell her what would be on my mind at that time, whatever it might be.

The headwaiter placed a telegram on the table and said:

"For you, Herr Professor."

I opened it and read: TERRIBLY SORRY AM ILL PLEASE COME TO SEE ME PEGGY

I rushed to the Imperial and found Peggy in bed, propped up against two pillows, her dark hair loose, long and rich around her shoulders, her face tired and pale, and her wide gray eyes half-closed.

"I suppose I overdid it," she said in a voice strained with fatigue and illness.

She pressed my hand like a child. It was warm and moist, and when I felt her forehead, it was feverish. I phoned Siegfried at once and sat down on the edge of the bed to wait for him. I urged Peggy not to talk, and, as she smiled assent, the whole of her face was transformed with a tender light which revealed the woman her strenuous work had concealed.

Siegfried said it was the grippe, and that she must stay in bed for a week. I hired a night nurse, but every afternoon immediately after work I came to see Peggy, brought violets or roses, and stayed until it was time for her to sleep again. She could not say much, but seemed to accept my presence naturally and simply, as if I had always belonged there, as if anything else would be unthinkable. And most extraordinary of all, this woman who was so energetic was also capable of suspending her will until all barriers between us seemed to vanish without forethought or explanation.

A week later, when she was convalescing, I felt completely at home with her. The nurse had gone, and we spent the evening alone in her room. She sat in an armchair, dressed for the first time since her illness; her face was rested, her gray eyes bright with returning health, and her voice had recaptured its natural tenderness and clarity.

She asked me about my father, saying she had heard much about him among the people she had visited in Floridsdorf, and wanted to know more about the kind of man and father he had been; and soon I found myself pouring out stories about him. Then Peggy asked me about my youth, my boyhood, even my childhood; and she, who the day before had seemed like a child to me, and the week before like an Amazon, now seemed like an angel who soothed all the wounds of the past so that they no longer ached and therefore no longer needed to be silent; and I found myself telling her freely a thousand little details of my early life which I had forgotten, and which now seemed tremendously important and tremendously joyous only because she insisted upon knowing them. Then she told me about her life in England, the boarding school

she had attended in Surrey, her father who was a liberal lawyer and her mother who went to kirk every Sunday, her college days at the London School of Economics, and her first newspaper jobs; and in the end she told me, without shame or reserve, of the only romance of her life, long ago, which had left her without happiness and without regret, unmarred in any of her beliefs and hopes, unscarred in body, mind or heart.

The words came freely from both of us. We opened our hearts to each other almost unawares, as if we were alone in the world with heaven as our only witness. And when we had relived our two separate lives together, they suddenly became one, like two streams that flow into each other to make one river; and I told Peggy I loved her. And when she replied that she loved me, the prison bars around my heart dissolved and it cried out within me in the highest raptures of joy and freedom, and we kissed in a long silence. Then I held her face in my two hands and looked at it for a long time, my heart beating furiously all the while, and I saw how very beautiful she was. And I realized that the essence of love is not physical beauty alone, but also spiritual truth—the essential agreement of two hearts, their unequivocal candor toward each other, the confluence of souls beyond the clash of wills; and it is this which renders any beloved body beautiful, however little it may conform to evanescent conventions, because we are linked to it by the absolute certainty that nothing whatever can separate our whole being from the whole being of her whom we love with complete surrender.

We were married in the middle of June. There was a civil ceremony, followed by a party at the Imperial to which we invited our friends. Peggy's parents and her younger sister flew in from London, and Hague flew in from Berlin; and most of the people I knew in Vienna were there. Peggy looked radiant; and I realized then that no man knows the full extent of love until he can proudly stand by his bride for all the world to see what hitherto they alone have known, that they are one and indissoluble.

It was nice to receive gifts, too. The most gratifying of these came from Hague, who appointed Peggy Vienna correspondent of his papers at double her previous salary, and told me privately that I was the luckiest dog on six continents.

Afterward, Peggy and I traveled two hours out of Vienna to the beautiful Semmering Pass, and took a small suite in a quiet, remote hotel. It was sheer joy to watch her face and hear her voice across the dinner table; and at night, when we stood on the balcony outside our window and inhaled the crystalline mountain air and

listened to the wonderful stillness, I knew that as long as Peggy was beside me, life could not be anything but good. We woke in the morning above the clouds, breakfasted on the balcony in the sunshine, and watched the white mists rise from the green world beneath, revealing it slowly, that earth so full of loveliness and suffering in which all our destinies inhere. In the afternoon, we climbed around the head of the pass to the Sonnwendstein, five thousand feet high, and looked down across the valley to the Semmering two thousand feet below. And in the evening, our bodies and minds refreshed and pleasantly tired from the climb, we lounged in our rooms, reading and talking. Then in the still hours of the night we learned that no one has really seen the radiant face of Eros who is not truly in love and truly married.

There were other guests in the hotel, but we avoided them; we hardly knew they existed and did not know at all what they looked like. They were polite shadows to whom one said good morning or good night on the porch, in the dining room, on the stairs or in the corridors. Peggy and I were gloriously alone.

Most wonderful of all in the next three weeks of our harmonious isolation from the world was the ease with which we moved from plane to plane of experience. Life was single and whole; whether we made love or spoke our hearts to each other or exchanged ideas, it was always single, always whole; and thereby we ceased to be isolated; for the very love which made each of us transcend his own limitations and enlarge his life through the other, made both of us together part of the teeming globe which our eyes could not see but whose hopes and fears were integral with our own, one and indissoluble. For the first time in my life, the fate of mankind was near and dear to me, profoundly, inseparably embedded in my being, not because of any abstract idea, or anything I had read in a book, or as a mere professional interest, or a piece of social cant, or even as a moral obligation; but joyously and naturally and as a matter of absolute necessity, because with Peggy life was so good that it aroused the longing to make it better, and the alarm lest evil destroy the matrix in which all that we wanted together was deeply rooted.

There was diversity in our harmony, too; for while our hearts and souls and minds were essentially one, our temperaments varied decidedly. We had come out of different lands and pasts, there was seven years difference in our ages, and biology had its own laws not to be ignored. Altogether, Peggy was far more practical than I, not only in the little affairs of every day but also in her concepts of life as a whole. She was interested in the events of the day, in the fragment of time in which the immediate episode takes place. Sometimes

she laughed with good humor at what she called my "Austrian platronics," saying I treated the living as if they were dead and the dead as if they were living. Perhaps because she was so immersed in the present, so avid for the news of the day, she was essentially of a more hopeful disposition than I. If our generation can solve its problems, she would say, we could rest assured that future generations will be able to take care of themselves; but if we fail, all our fine-spun theories about the day after tomorrow are no more than the wind writing upon the water ephemeral circles, that blow away leaving no trace behind them.

"Watch out for your skepticism," she warned me. I may add that while her German was rapidly improving, we spoke only English to each other. "A man without hope can't accomplish anything. And don't try to cure your skepticism by becoming a doctrinaire. A man who lets a theory ride him regardless of the facts is a nuisance to himself and the world."

Her hope was based on no theory, but on a faith in life and man; and some of it, I think, was derived from the literature of her country which she knew and loved. Shortly before we were married, she had sent to London for most of her books, and some of these she had brought with her to the Semmering. I remember one evening, after a glorious day of tramping the hills in the golden summer air, we relaxed in our room. I said something about my pet theory of "historic time," and she asked me whether I knew Shelley's work, and I said no. She said, naturally not; if there was anything more provincial than an Englishman, it was a Continental, and she read me the great poet's lines on Time: Unfathomable sea! whose waves are years; Ocean of Time, whose waters of deep woes are brackish with salt of human tears! Thou shoreless flood, which in thy ebb and flow claspest the limits of mortality; and sick of prey, yet howling on for more, vomitest thy wrecks on its inhospitable shore: treacherous in calm, and terrible in storm, who shall put forth on thee, unfathomable sea?

I was quite struck by those lines and by the whole tenor of Shelley's feeling about life; and from that day on Peggy often read me passages from the great poets of her country. She said it would improve my English, and that poetry was the best starting point from which we could become better acquainted with each other's views of the world, since the poet utters awake what other men dare only dream asleep. And it is true that the reading of a poem together often led us to an exchange of moral ideas which for us, as for all other people, were lighthouses seeking to illuminate the unfathomable sea of time. They also illuminated Peggy's heart for me, and I found it good. I remember one golden afternoon we lay in

the grass under a shady tree; her face, suffused by the summer light, was clear and lovely, and there were deep pools of thought in her wide gray eyes. She read me various passages from *Paradise Lost* in a voice which never failed to move me; and she spoke the great round periods with such profound feeling that the world became utterly, unspeakably beautiful because Peggy existed, because she was here beside me, because her voice addressed me, because I was near her and because somehow the verse was a vibrant part of our life together. Then she closed the book and we kissed across its folded covers in silence, and later we talked about good and evil and she told me why Shelley considered Prometheus a more poetical character than Lucifer: because in addition to courage, majesty and firm, patient opposition to omnipotent force, the Greek hero was exempt from the taints of ambition, envy, revenge and a desire for personal aggrandizement. And Peggy said this with such genuine feeling that I took her in my arms and kissed her long and tenderly as if I wanted to kiss her very soul, because what she had just told me was not only a secret of English poetry but a secret of her own golden heart.

Amidst these felicitous hours, Peggy found time to read the newspapers which came by mail, and she did not let a day pass without noting down events and ideas in the little news-diary she kept for her work. She usually picked the time when I was taking notes for my projected book *From Augustus to Augustine* (it was actually published the following year); and my thought leaped forward clear and full of energy because we worked in the same room.

The day on which the news came of the bloodpurge in the north left Peggy completely unstrung. She could not touch any food, and while she accompanied me on a walk along the mountainside, she maintained a stubborn silence all afternoon. It was only at night, when we retired to our rooms, that she said:

"Everything will be too late. People have forgotten how to take warning from events."

"Why does this upset you so?" I asked. "It's not any worse than a hundred other atrocities which have befouled Europe for the past twenty years. You're not sorry for the victims, are you?"

"Hardly," she said. "But when Caesar massacres his closest friends, what can his enemies expect?"

"We are his enemies," I said.

"Exactly," she said. "But there are more powerful entities whom Caesar considers his worst enemies, whom he has sworn to annihilate, yet even after this terrible warning they will fawn upon him and placate him and furnish him the very instruments he needs for their destruction."

"What gloomy thoughts, darling. It's not at all like you."

"The situation is gloomy," she said. "I've been watching it for some time, and I'm afraid the wise men of the world are not half so wise as they imagine. They are making expensive blunders, and I'm wondering whether this bloodpurge will teach them anything."

She sat up late that night making notes in her news-diary; and as I looked up from my own work and saw her face, now pale and tense, I was worried about her. She kept the radio going all the time, listening completely to every bit of news that came through and only half listening to Gustav Mahler's *Eighth Symphony* which I turned on; and at night she tossed restlessly in her sleep.

But the following morning she was herself again; and for the next two weeks, across the golden days and fragrant mountain nights, we lived that life together which seemed to her like a dream, but to me was the essence of reality, the true face of life which our primitive heritage of fear and conflict prevents us from unveiling except in the most rare and exalted hours of love.

2

*When all life dies, death lives, and Nature breeds,
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Abominable, inutterable.*

—*Paradise Lost.*

ONE RAINY JULY NIGHT, Peggy left the dining room after a late supper and went upstairs to our little suite, while I stopped at the hotel desk for some cigarettes. The house was already quiet at that hour, and as I walked up the two flights of stairs I could hear the heavy rain rattling on the corridor windows and the thunder cascading in the far-off valleys. I was about to open the door of our suite, when I heard a voice say almost inaudibly:

"I beg your pardon, sir."

The voice came from the room opposite. Its owner was standing in the open doorway smiling at me in a curious way. I had never seen him before, and if he was a guest in the hotel I had failed to notice him along with all the others. I stood still and watched the stranger, wondering what he wanted and trying to make out his face in the dim hall light which burned in the wall next to my door. As he came close, I saw he was tall and muscular, but the features of his face were obscured by the shadows.

"I beg your pardon, sir," he said again. His voice was deep and pleasant and he kept it at so low a pitch that I just barely heard him. "Could you change this bill for me?"

He handed me a banknote and even before I brought it up to the light my hand began to tremble. It was half a bill scissored across the middle and bore the serial number *Q 16-739*. I handed it back to him quickly and stood there in foolish silence staring at this vague, long-expected messenger from a secret and dangerous realm.

"My name is Egon Fuchs," he said.

A door shook and I must have looked scared. The man turned his head casually and glanced up and down the corridor. We heard a key grate in a lock; someone was shutting himself in for the night.

"Please act normally," Egon Fuchs said. "I am a guest at this hotel and have a perfect right to talk to you. May I?"

"Of course."

"Then would you be good enough to call your wife and join me in my room?"

"My wife?"

"I think it will be better if you both hear what I have to say."

"Wouldn't it be wiser if you visited us?"

"Naturally," he said. "I hoped you would make that suggestion. Thank you."

I was about to knock on my door to warn Peggy I was bringing a guest, but he seized my wrist and stopped me. Under the light I could see he was smiling broadly.

"Under the circumstances," he said, "hadn't we better dispense with formalities and take the risk of offending Mrs. Schuman?"

I opened the door and closed it behind us quickly. Fortunately, Peggy was fully dressed. She was seated at the table writing in her diary and looked up in surprise when she saw I was not alone.

"Darling," I said, "this is Egon Fuchs, a friend of my father's."

"Won't you make yourself at home, Mr. Fuchs?" Peggy said. She offered him a chair graciously and, having picked up a few of our Viennese customs, went into the kitchenette to fetch some wine and cake.

Fuchs stretched out his legs, lit a cigarette and looked at me smiling. I went into the bedroom where I kept the books I had brought with me for the summer holidays, picked out Sigebert de Gembloux's *De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis*, and from among its leaves extracted the torn banknote my father had given me that memorable night in Floridsdorf. This I brought into the living room and laid out on the table nervously. Fuchs smiled again, took his half of the bill and matched them. They fitted perfectly.

"They told me you were a rather cautious fellow," he grinned. "In times like these, I wouldn't reform, if I were you."

He picked up the two sections of the note, placed them in a large ash tray on the edge of the table and lit a match to them. The flame spurted up for a moment, then began to smoulder slowly as Fuchs watched it. I was struck by the coloring of his face. It was thin and extremely fair, almost white and pink, like a girl's; but there were hard lines in it, though he could not have been more than thirty. His thick hair, brushed straight back in military style, was pale yellow; and his cornflower-blue eyes twinkled continually with some secret that was at once merry and deadly dangerous. He took the brown ashes which had once been a Balkan banknote and, with my permission, threw them out the window into the thick grass two

stories below. The rain and wind sent a chill through the room. Then he closed the window and we listened to the drops tapping on the glass in low persistent rhythm.

Peggy came in from the kitchenette with a tray on which stood a decanter of Tokay, a platter of Torte and some glasses. She arranged these on the table and sat down near me. Fuchs turned to her courteously and said:

"You must forgive this strange visit, Mme. Schuman. Please allow me to explain. Your husband already knows this, but there should be no secrets between people like you."

"Thank you," said Peggy suspiciously.

"I was a friend of Professor Schuman's father," Fuchs went on calmly. "For some time past, I have been working in the Underground. I occupy a high post in Berlin. If they knew who I really am, they would kill me."

"You show a great deal of confidence in us," said Peggy.

Egon Fuchs leaned back and laughed softly. He lifted the wine-glass which Peggy had filled for him, drank half of the dark-red liquid and started to nibble a Torte.

"It was arranged some time ago that I was to contact Professor Schuman," he said.

"That's quite true, dear," I said, taking Peggy's hand.

"Since then," Fuchs went on, "we have learned to trust you also, madame."

"That's very kind of you," Peggy said. "What do you know about me?"

Her face was very vivid now and beautiful in its severity; the wide, gray eyes took in our mysterious visitor with a direct gaze and for me became the focal point of a lamp-lit room in which every object and every shadow stood out with startling clarity; for fear, no less than love, makes us acutely aware of the world.

"Everything we need to know," Fuchs said.

"Then they know, too."

"Unfortunately, yes. That is why we must know every bit as much and more. It's for your own protection."

He said this so simply and sincerely that I felt Peggy's hand relaxing in mine.

"You have a message for my father's friends here?" I said.

"No longer," said Fuchs. "That has already been relayed through other channels. For reasons I'm not free to explain, I'd like you to convey a message to your friend Mme. Ritter."

Peggy's face turned white as marble.

"They killed Helga's husband in the bloodpurge," she said.

"Right," said Fuchs. "And people have the gall to ridicule woman's intuition."

Peggy lit a cigarette and now her hand was quite steady.

"I did not guess that as a woman," she said, "but as a journalist."

"The news seemed to upset you," Fuchs said. "Was Ritter a friend of yours?"

"No," said Peggy. "I am upset for Helga, who is a friend of mine; and for the world because of everything that frightful episode implies in the future."

"It *was* a frightful episode," Fuchs said quietly. "Just how frightful we do not know yet and perhaps never shall."

Then, in the same low, firm voice he began to unfold one of those melodramas of Hochpolitik which first shock the wits out of us, then are neatly explained away and finally are forgotten in all their incredible terror and far-reaching meaning, until the slaughter of yesterday, like some nightmare out of the most archaic times, seems to us as commonplace as last year's snow. After Fuchs had dissected and brushed out of the way rumors, guesses and theories, and created some order out of apparent chaos, and related Reichswehr to stormtroop, and one conspiracy to another, there emerged the stark, fantastic picture of one of Europe's most powerful leaders personally supervising the murder of his closest friends and followers, as well as his most bitter foes, and instigating a Sicilian Vespers in which envy, jealousy, suspicion, greed and fear had a field day of blood.

From the inside, Fuchs knew the details, though he had not himself participated in this twentieth century multiplication of Cesare Borgia's murders at Sinigaglia. He vividly described for us that fateful Saturday morning when armored cars and troop-transport trucks filled with soldiers in bright green uniforms rumbled through the streets of a tyranny's capital; when Himmler's agents, Goering's police and the Fuehrer's bodyguard ransacked the headquarters and homes of the proscribed and shot them down as systematically as a butcher slaughters cattle.

The murders were carried out with precision in various parts of the country, and in the very cradle of the brown menace, the Fuehrer himself marched into the boudoir of his closest friend and found him embracing young Count Spretti in a monstrous act of perverse love.

Here the details made Peggy flush, not so much because of the erotic aspect, but because of what followed, so horrible was the decay and degradation which the whole episode revealed. For after the Fuehrer rushed out of Roehm's bedroom ("in disgust," said the official communiqué, as if the brown grandees had learned of these abominations in their exalted circles for the first time) SS men dragged the Stormtroop chieftain away to a prison cell and silently placed an automatic pistol on the table beside his bed, and went out again. And so thoroughly infected with sickness of the soul were

these men who arrogated to themselves the right to remold Europe for the next thousand years, that Roehm leaped to his feet and pounded the door with his frenzied fists and screamed at the top of his voice like a wounded, enraged bull. Ten minutes passed, and two of the Fuehrer's giant guardsmen came in, each pointing a loaded revolver at Roehm, who was sitting on the edge of the bed, crying hysterically—he, “the new Napoleon,” as his friends called him; he who had never shed a single tear of compassion when his Stormtroopers had beaten and murdered innocent men and women in his climb to criminal power. When he saw the two guards enter, he sprang up and began to bellow wildly:

“Let Hitler shoot me! Call Hitler! I want to see my Fuehrer!”

The pistols of the guards thundered in that narrow cell, and Roehm gasped and crumpled into a heap on the floor. Thus died the man whose comrades had forgiven him every one of his sins except that of desiring more power than his leader had assigned him among those whose trade is naked dominion; for there is no greater crime than that another man should covet your place in the world, and should try to replace you the way you have replaced your predecessors.

After the murder, it was said, the Fuehrer speeded through the night in his open touring car, wailing and howling in a loud, piercing voice along the streets, like an injured animal or a diseased hysterical woman—he, the self-appointed savior of a nation, would-be conqueror of the world, deliverer and god of vengeance whose only gift was demented, violent, criminal death.

This was the most sordid, the most revealing episode of the bloodpurge. Even the hard-boiled General von Reichenau—that tall, deep-chested, robust careerist and Lothario who helped plan the proscriptions and the killings; even he, the callous intrigant, literally blushed when the Roehm affair was mentioned and said:

“Oh, please, spare me that! It was the most revolting scene ever enacted. It was terrible.”

Following the bloodpurge Goebbels made a speech justifying it. He admitted some of the victims were innocent but said that was a gain for the Nazi movement; because *the shedding of innocent blood makes the cause more sacred*.

After Egon Fuchs had finished telling this story, we sat in silence for a long time, then Peggy said in a low, tense voice: “What horrible beasts! What a warning!” Egon Fuchs looked intently at her oval pale face, lovely for all its anxiety and because of it, and went on to tell about Ritter. He wanted us to know all the facts, but to conceal as much as possible from Helga. It would be best, he said, to spare her the details, to tell her merely that Ritter had been killed

by those to whom he had dedicated his life and fortune. But he did not spare us the details.

He was in Ritter's office on some business that fatal June morning. The telephone rang. A friend called Ritter to say that "something big was up." Ritter hung up, pale and nervous. He discussed with Fuchs the possible meaning of that phone call. At the slightest sound he would start up and look around him with a wild, anguished look. He was in all their dirty intrigues up to his ears and had every reason to be afraid, if only because he knew too much and had too much money.

There was a knock on the door. Ritter straightened up instantly, wheeled about in his chair and said brusquely:

"Come in!"

His secretary entered, a rather young and pretty girl who was part of the seraglio he kept in Berlin.

"Herr Ritter," she said softly, "there are two SS men outside who want to see you."

"Let them wait!" Ritter snapped.

"They say they're in a hurry, sir. They must see you at once on a very urgent matter, they say."

"All right," said Ritter. "Show them into my private office."

The girl glided out. Soon the two men heard a door slam in the next room and the tread of heavy boots. Ritter seemed lost in thought for a moment; then he opened the center drawer of his writing desk, took out a revolver and slipped it into his side pocket.

"Have you a cigarette?" he asked.

Fuchs gave him a cigarette and lit it for him. Ritter took a few nervous puffs, laid it down in an ash tray and walked to the door leading into the next room, Fuchs following. In the center of the private office stood two gigantic, black-uniformed SS officers. They looked sharply first at Fuchs, then at Ritter, uncertain which was the man they wanted.

"Herr Ritter," one of the officers said.

"Yes, please," said Ritter.

The officer turned to Fuchs and snapped:

"Get out."

Egon Fuchs went back to Ritter's main office. The moment he closed the door behind him he heard the crash of revolver shots. He counted them—eight. They've done it, he thought, and hurried out into the corridor. Office employees were standing about, terror in their eyes. All doors were guarded by black-uniformed SS men. They had obviously wanted only Ritter, for they bothered nobody else and did not stop Fuchs during that eternity in which he crossed the length of the crowded corridor. He reached the head of the stairs

and hesitated, wondering what would happen next. The door of Ritter's private office opened and he could see a blue haze of slowly vanishing smoke. The two SS officers came out, slammed the door behind them and put their revolvers into their holsters.

"Well," said one of them, "that's done."

He said it calmly, with evident satisfaction, as one speaks of a set task precisely performed, and he said it loud enough for all those people in the corridor and all the SS guards to hear. It was a public murder. In the brown realm, the new elite were not ashamed of shedding blood, least of all the blood of their own adherents for whom they knew the world would have little sympathy.

All the SS men left. Egon Fuchs followed several secretaries as they rushed, pale and frightened, into Ritter's private office. The industrialist was lying face down on the floor, dead in a russet pool of his own blood. The doctor whom Fuchs called from an office in the same building counted five bullets in the body. He must have fired the other three shots himself in a frantic, utterly hopeless effort to save his life from the men upon whom he had counted to create a slave-Europe that would make him richer and stronger than ever.

Fuchs then told us that only partial lists of those murdered in the proscriptions had been published, that Ritter was quietly buried by several friends in Berlin without announcing the fact in the newspapers; and that Helga, who was in the Tyrol on her summer vacation, knew nothing of all this. He advised us not to write her, but to wait until we saw her in town again, and to tell her the barest essentials then. Clearly, he told us the whole story not only for Helga's sake, whatever his purpose in this connection was, but to impress us also with the utter vileness of the brown regime. As he rose to say good night, he remarked casually:

"By the way, we're going to form some anti-Nazi groups in Vienna soon. I hope you two can find some way of being useful."

He thanked us for our hospitality, urged me not to accompany him to the door, and said he would leave the Semmering very early in the morning.

"However," he said, smiling—and now that his business with us was over, his face looked quite at ease and rather attractive—"we'll probably meet again sometime in the next ten years."

Alone, Peggy and I were depressed by the whole story. There was an air of anxiety in the night. We could not speak for a while and sat there facing each other, listening to the rain. Soon the rain stopped, and a vast silence filled the world. We went to bed, but could not sleep. I held Peggy close to my heart all night long, and in the dark watched her eyes, open, liquid, full of vague alarm, searching mine; and without saying anything, each of us knew what the

other was thinking. The fate of the victims did not touch us at all; but if in the heart of Europe the leaders of a great state could regress to the most primitive methods of revenge and murder to settle political differences, then perhaps their threats to the rest of the world ought not to be taken as lightly as some responsible people were taking them; and we, who lived so close to the charnel house, lay awake that night in the enveloping stillness of the mountains and heard the river of blood flowing ever nearer to Vienna.

The next morning Peggy spent most of the time making notes in her news-diary and outlining a story for her papers, while I worked on my book. Afterward, when we were eating lunch downstairs in the dining room, we talked about what Egon Fuchs had told us; and I said that neither among the beasts of prey in the jungle nor among the sharks of the sea could anything as horrible take place as among the demented men of the north; and I agreed with Peggy's repeated insistence that the river of blood they had loosed mirrored the crimes they were bound to commit against the whole world. Then we talked a little about the mysterious stranger who had visited us the previous night, and wondered who he really was and admired his courage in facing the risks of underground life. Finally Peggy smiled and said:

"You weren't taken in by that business about Helga, were you?"

"It sounded plausible enough to me," I said.

"Oh, he meant that part of it, all right. But what he was really after was—me!"

"Why you?"

"A correspondent for British and American papers can be quite useful." Peggy took my hand and laughed softly. "But of course—I'll do what I can for them. Against the brown menace—anything!"

In the afternoon, we went out into the fields and lay in the sun and looked at each other in quiet joy; and when I kissed her, the shadows of the world vanished and life was good again. And it seemed to me, as it always seemed to me now, that this was the first time I had ever touched her and inhaled the exhilarating fragrance of her being and saw the glories of her face and the light of her gray eyes and the dark silk of her hair and heard the murmur of her voice vibrant with emotion. Oh, I had never really known how wonderful she was, I had never really loved her before, and this was the very first time that I knew her deeply and truly and adored her with the very last atom of my being forever and ever.

Afterward she wept a little, partly out of happiness, partly out of relief from the previous night's anxiety; and, kissing me tenderly, she rose from the warm, sunlit grass and leaped into the air several

times, laughing brightly and clearly, as if she were certain she could touch the brilliant blue sky with her fingers. Then we walked arm in arm to a wide crag and looked down at the mists in the valley below and felt that nothing in the world could possibly assail our happiness. We were standing very close side by side, arm in arm, but did not look at each other; we looked down into the summer mists rolling in the valley below us, and I said:

"Darling, darling, darling, there are no words in any language ever spoken by men to tell you how much I love you; yes, you are everything I have ever wanted; you have come to me in the flesh out of all the most wonderful dreams I have ever had; you are here to be loved and you are good, good beyond all thought, because you allow me to love you."

And when I had said that, I felt for the first time that the ideal and the real can be absolutely identical, that there are miraculous hours in every life when the square coincides with the circle; nay more, when what you actually have is far more beautiful than any dream of it that ever haunted you; for truly, as the great Athenian said, love is intermediate between the divine and the mortal.

"I love you, too, Paul," she said looking up into my eyes. "I love you and I want to bear you a son and I want him to be like you."

The phrase startled me.

"In times like these?" I said.

"Yes."

"Would you bring a child into a world that is making ready to slaughter its children?"

"Yes."

"Aren't you afraid?"

"No. Why are you afraid?" she said, her wide gray eyes searching mine intently.

"I can't bear the idea of sacrificing a son whom I would love as I love you now to the catastrophe which is moving upon Europe like a vast, relentless whirlwind of flame."

"I see the catastrophe, too," she said, "and I want a son to stand up in it, if need be to die in it, fighting for that world which our grandchildren deserve."

"No, darling, no! It would be on our part, knowing everything we do, deliberate murder."

"It would be true love," she said, "the love that moves mountains which faith cannot even see."

Dusk was beginning to streak the vaulting heavens a deep red, and a soft wind sprang up from the street. I put my arm around Peggy's waist and said, laughing:

"I'm not ready to share your love with anybody, not even a son."

Give me a two-year monopoly on your heart, then we can take up the matter again."

She kissed me long with her eyes wide open, then stood back and said with the most extraordinary naïveté:

"O Paul! I love you, I love you—and I wish you were English!" The moment she realized what she had said, she laughed gaily and added: "You know what I mean!"

"Of course!" I said, and we both laughed, and our laughter mingled with the evening wind. Her face became grave now and she said reflectively:

"Do you know, Paul? The gentlest of our poets had more faith in life at its worst than you, who ought to know better."

It was then, in that fantastically beautiful sunset on the heights of the Semmering, looking down into the mist-covered world below, that Peggy recited slowly those lines which were to haunt me later in a distorted form, under wholly unexpected circumstances, in the most sensational way: To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite; to forgive wrongs darker than death or night; to defy Power, which seems omnipotent; to love and bear; to hope till Hope creates from its own wreck the thing it contemplates; neither to change nor falter nor repent: this, like thy glory, Titan, is to be good, great and joyous, beautiful and free; this is alone Life, Joy, Empire and Victory!

A week later, as we were working in our little suite, the radio announced that the little chancellor's government had resigned and that power had been assumed by a well-known political adventurer close to the Nazis.

We packed at once and traveled for two hours back to the city, and there Peggy found a story that kept her busy for days, interviewing people everywhere and typing dispatches in my apartment, which was our temporary home.

It was an Austrian caricature of the northern bloodpurge. When the fragments of that sanguinary July morning were finally pieced together, it became clear enough that the Fuehrer's river of blood had at last reached Vienna. For on that day, one hundred and forty-four Nazis, disguised as soldiers and led by an ex-corporal (Oh, these ex-corporals who leave their dung on the heights of history!) battered their way into the Bundeskanzleramt, the old Metternich palace which housed the federal government. The little chancellor, warned of their arrival, tried to escape through a white room to the hall where the Congress of Vienna had once met to undo Napoleon's work. There were three doors in the white room, and as a valet tried to unlock the one which led to the congress hall, the little chancellor reached for the doorknob. At this moment, the Nazi ex-corporal

entered through another door and at close range shot the chancellor, first under the armpit, then in the throat. The chancellor's head crashed to the floor as he fell, his tiny body lay limp on the rug and he moaned for help.

"Stand up!" the ex-corporal ordered.

"I can't," the chancellor said.

They picked him up and stretched him out on a rose-colored divan and his blood left three large oakleaf stains on the embroidery. The Fuehrer's triggermen left him there bleeding. Three hours later, they called Major Fey, leather-faced Heimwehr hero, into the room where the chancellor lay dying. The Nazis held a pistol to Fey's back and would not let him say a word.

"Try to settle this without bloodshed," the chancellor whispered, his blood ominously dripping into a washbasin as he slowly bled to death, and it is utterly inconceivable that at this moment he remembered the blood he had shed in Floridsdorf.

The Nazi triggermen rushed Fey out of the room. He begged them to get a doctor for the chancellor, or at least a priest. They refused. An hour later the chancellor died. And that week in sending her story of the murder and its sequels to New York and London, Peggy added a paragraph saying (in her capacity of "amateur historian," no doubt) that history has its own retributions; for during those four sanguinary days when the chancellor's artillery wiped out the communal houses, he had robbed the republic of the only force which could have resisted the brown menace; and now the clamorous harbingers of blood and death hovered over Vienna, black-shirt and brownshirt troops lined our frontiers, and Caesar in the tan raincoat smiled, a vulture certain of his prey.

It was impossible amidst these shadows enveloping the world to return to the Semmering. We decided to remain in the city, and set about at once to find a larger apartment. The four rooms we finally rented were conveniently located near both the university and those official buildings which Peggy had to visit as foreign correspondent; and I was delighted to discover that the janitor of the house was Otto Weber, who used to run the elevator in the Daungasse when *The Future* was still there. He had taken this new job because he was now married and needed more money. His wife turned out to be a strong, simple, capable young woman who had grown up in Floridsdorf. She had known my father and remembered Peggy with admiration and gratitude from those weeks when "the wonderful Englishwoman," as the Webers called her, came with relief money for the victims of the great massacre.

Despite her regular duties around the building, Emma Weber found time to help Peggy put our apartment in shape, and occasionally shopped for her. Gradually, we became friends with the

Webers. Sometimes we dropped in at their basement apartment across the broad, sunlit courtyard for a Sunday afternoon of beer, cards and gossip; and occasionally we invited them to join us when Uncle Peter or Professor Gross or Siegfried came with friends for an evening of wine, cake and dialectical exercises on the loftiest and most trivial themes.

Emma and Peggy became especially close; each found in the other some necessary fulfillment. The former factory girl saw in my wife the embodiment of beauty, knowledge and good manners; Peggy saw in Mrs. Weber certain earthy, almost primitive qualities which she respected all the more because she lacked them.

In the fall, Helga returned from the Tyrol and Peggy invited her to our house for "English tea." In spite of her preoccupations as a journalist, Peggy was a very gracious hostess on Helga's own level; and it was with extraordinary tact that she told Helga of the manner of Ritter's death in the northern capital. The effect on Helga was exactly what I imagine Egon Fuchs had intended. First she wept with agony, shame and rage; then she wiped her eyes and said:

"I had a feeling something like this would happen to him. I warned him against those monsters a thousand times. Well, at least I can use what money I have left to fight them."

Subsequently, all three of us agreed to join an antifascist group then being formed in Vienna. That fall I gave it as much time as I could after a heavy day at the university, and my life became crowded with activity. My work in the classroom had increased and I found myself doing it more intensely. That precious quality with which married love endowed everything in the world now extended itself to my students. I felt a profound sense of obligation to them, and for the first time in years I thought about Professor Boucher in Paris, and tried to emulate him in the solicitude and responsibility with which I taught the minds whose formation had been entrusted to my care. The days were busy and fruitful; evenings I spent with Peggy, either working on my book at home, or visiting friends, or going to theaters, movies and concerts—all of which received added life and beauty from her presence.

The most memorable event we witnessed together came toward the close of the year. Accompanied by Uncle Peter, for whom it had profound emotional meaning, we attended the memorial service held in the Vienna Opera House for the little chancellor. In that hushed, splendid auditorium, everyone was dressed in black except the army officers, and nearly all the faces assumed expressions of piety and sadness. From the orchestra row where the three of us sat, we could see men and women around us wiping their eyes with handkerchiefs, moved by the memory of the martyred statesman and the mood of All Souls' Day which weighed heavily upon us amidst the ancient

pomp of red, black and gold. A spirit of mourning and hope filled the vast hall as Arturo Toscanini conducted the Vienna Philharmonic in Verdi's *Requiem*; then the dark-clad chorus on the stage lifted its beautiful harmony of voice and filled the red, black and gold space over us with the passionate appeals to heaven of the *Kyrie eleison*, during which I heard Uncle Peter, his white head bowed, murmur to himself: *et lux perpetua luceat ei*. Finally the chorus ended the service with the solemn and terrible vision of the last Judgment in the *Dies Irae*.

We followed the crowd into the streets and for a long time walked along the Ring in silence. Then we went to a café and had some cake and wine. Uncle Peter looked at Peggy and at me for a long time, uncertain whether he could trust us with the real thoughts of his mind. At last, addressing himself to Peggy alone, he said:

"You are a stranger in our midst, my daughter, But today you saw the soul of our country. You saw it in its tragic hour of national mourning for its most patriotic son, a simple, honest and upright servant of the people who died at his post like a true hero."

Peggy and I looked at each other across the café table, and our eyes flashed agreement on the thought which filled both our minds at that moment; Uncle Peter was genuinely moved by the death of the little chancellor, just as moved as I had been by my father's death at the hands of the chancellor's troops; and how strange it was that in the midst of the appalling cruelties of our times, men could be so callous about the death of their opponents and so touched by the death of their friends, as men had always been, and perhaps must be, amidst the appalling cruelties of all times.

Uncle Peter did not notice the glance that passed between my wife and myself, but still looking with his aging eyes at Peggy's lovely, composed face, said:

"Yes, my daughter, today in that vast hall filled with mourning and music, you saw a confession of faith in our country, in the genius of its race, in the imperishable mystery of our religious creed—a creed which breaks through all the shabby and brutal limits of everyday existence and strives with passionate love toward the ideal of a pure humanity."

Again Peggy and I exchanged a glance of mutual understanding; we listened to my uncle gravely and with respectful attention, and when we parted from him and he kissed Peggy tenderly on the forehead and asked her to invite him to our house more often, we knew how truly lonely the old man was.

Soon we were to discover how much lonelier young people in love could be in quite another way.

3

. . . more light,
*heard from the lips of a last, dim, anonymous face,
the child born crying into a naked world.*

—Horace Gregory.

MURDER AT A DISTANCE is one thing; you can be quite philosophical about it—if you want to. Murder on your own street is something else again, no matter how detached you like to be; it brings the catastrophic nature of the times too near your doorstep for comfort.

The death of Dollfuss, which hung like a pall over the city, increased our sensitivity to events; and in the course of the next two years, whenever Peggy showed me her news-diary, I could see the graph of high violence rising steadily toward some awful doom. Was there really a time once when we dreamed that all men's good shall be each man's rule, and universal peace lie like a shaft of light across the land, and like a lane of beams across the sea, through all the circle of the golden year? Now everything seemed to be moving in the opposite direction, day in and day out, without respite and without pity. At home, the next two years found our government digging the republic's grave deeper and deeper. One day all restrictions against the imperial family are abrogated to facilitate their restoration to the throne; another day sees our new chancellor, doomed to be our last, conferring with brown agents who demand more extensive propaganda privileges; now he repudiates a treaty and plans for universal military service; then he enlarges the dictatorial role of his predecessor.

Ominous, too, in the spring were Russell Hague's letters describing visits to Berlin and Rome of Spanish generals and millionaires who whispered plots for an uprising in their country with Axis support. Then, that summer, the birds of prey swooped down on the Iberian Peninsula, and again there emerged one of those moments in modern times when the fate of the world seemed to hang in the balance, and anxiety for its future overshadowed private concerns because it became the most intense of all private concerns.

Today, as I lie here in your office, doctor, trying to recall the past through the clamor and courage of the most gigantic war that ever flamed across the globe; when I think how the free, united peoples everywhere are fighting a monster unspeakably evil on every sea, in every sky, on every continent, below the raging waters and above the stormy clouds, through fiery desert sands and implacable winter frosts, with every device which the mind of man has conceived and the hand of labor has fashioned; and when I know with absolute assurance that in all the annals of mankind across the countless centuries there never was a crusade more just, more sacred or more deserving of that victory which is bound to crown and reward its necessary sacrifices—then, by comparison the conflict in Spain does indeed appear to be a small thing.

Yet, the more I think of it, the less I believe it was a small thing. In the years that follow our victory, the world will surely recall its past, as I am now recalling mine; and Spain will once more be understood and loved as we understood and loved it in those days when friend and foe alike looked into the mirror of its heroic agony and sought for omens of things to come; for as the embryo of the child recapitulates the past of man, so Spain outlined the future of Europe. Everything was there: a free people, assaulted by the most abominable elements in the land, bravely resisting the traitors in their midst and their foreign paymasters; ravenous Caesars, black and brown, and their local caudillos uniting to splatter the streets of the cities with the blood of innocent women and children; the clash of good and evil, freedom and slavery, barbarism and civilization; oh, everything was there, unmistakable, irreconcilable, a matter of life and death to the whole of mankind.

That is how we saw it in those days, and time has justified our forebodings as it will justify our hopes.

And now young men of our country crossed borders and mountains, crawling on their hands and knees through frozen nights close to the stars and to the shadows of death, and joined the volunteers of other lands who came to fight beside the Spanish people. And in Vienna, as in other great cities of the world, men and women of good will banded together to aid in every possible way. Naturally, Peggy and I participated in this work. We never hesitated for a moment on that score; no complex theories were involved; the issue between right and wrong was too palpably clear for any decent person to abstain, and the consequences of defeat were too obvious for anyone to stint his efforts for the democratic side. Peggy not only wrote for her papers on all local aspects of the Spanish conflict, but found time to give fund-raising parties and to work on various committees; while for the first time in my life I was persuaded to

lecture outside a university classroom at large meetings whose proceeds went to the cause of a brave people which was the cause of mankind. It was out of these lectures that I conceived the idea of doing a book called *Of Human Freedom* which would trace the struggle for democracy from earliest times to our own. But the days and nights were too busy with action for me to get beyond the title and a few basic notes, some of which Peggy suggested.

As a matter of fact, Peggy was far more interested in the book than I was. It represented for her the meeting point of our private and public concerns, and for special reasons she used to refer to it as "our baby."

I did not like to hear her say that, knowing how deeply she had suffered for the past year, since the time when one physician after another had assured her that under no circumstances could she possibly have a child. She accepted the verdict finally with that English stoicism whose silence only emphasized her pain. After she recovered from the first shock, we talked of adopting a child; but that seemed to present too many complications and we were compelled to drop the idea.

Deprivation only intensified Peggy's passion for children. At first she maintained that the offspring of people like ourselves (sterile tag ends of a sterile age, she once said in an inconsolable moment) could only be a poor substitute like work. It was then that she began to call my proposed story of democracy, half in earnest, half in joke, our baby, our child, our offspring, our son and heir. Her heart was deeply lacerated by nature's ultimatum, all the more bitter because there was nobody to blame and nobody to appeal to, because everything about it was as accidental as a falling boulder, as rigorously preordained as a shooting star, as inexorable as a typhoon. All her impulses now went out to children; whenever we used to walk along the boulevard or in the park, she would stop at some baby carriage, and, after complimenting the mother or nursemaid on the loveliness of the child, would spend hours cooing and crowing with the "little beggar."

Soon her desire for vicarious motherhood found an outlet nearer home. The moment Peggy discovered that Emma Weber, our janitor's wife, was going to have a baby, she spent hours with her in the basement apartment on the other side of the courtyard; and when she wasn't telling me about the news of the world, I had to listen to every detail of the great event which was about to bless the Webers. I doubt whether Otto himself knew as much about the mysteries of nature which were transpiring under his roof. Originally a carpenter by trade, he had begun to get odd jobs in various neighborhood

houses sawing wood, hammering nails and gluing furniture together. He accepted his approaching fatherhood as a matter of course; and, thanks to Peggy's profound interest in a child that was all the more dear to her because she could not have it, it was I who had to listen to all the fears and hopes that rent the heart of the prospective mother entering on the first stages of creation.

I did not share Peggy's enthusiasm; for me it was simply interesting that in a time of decay, catastrophe and death, an endlessly fertile nature continued to create life. Yet I could not help being moved by some of the details Peggy brought me; they revealed aspects of the human heart which I did not know existed. At the beginning, for instance, when Siegfried Gross was called in to examine Mrs. Weber and told her she had "a perfect female pelvis," the janitor's wife looked puzzled and frightened.

"The skeletal structure of some women," Siegfried explained in the jargon of his trade, "is part anthropoid and part male."

He drew a sketch on the back of an envelope and at last succeeded in making the details clear; and Mrs. Weber was so pleased to be what she called "a good female" that she kissed the doctor's hand, as if he were responsible for a piece of good fortune which he had merely announced. Black-eyed, round-faced, stalwart Emma Weber was a simple, goodhearted, hard-working woman, simple in dress, thought and feeling; the mysteries of life were all the more impressive to her because she imagined that educated people like ourselves really knew something about them.

For all practical purposes, Emma Weber had a first-class nurse during the entire period of her pregnancy; Peggy brought her books on the birth and care of children and encouraged her to follow Siegfried's orders strictly about avoiding alcohol, cigarettes and candy and keeping her weight down; and the janitor's wife told all our neighbors that the "wonderful Englishwoman" was like a sister to her, and better than a real sister at that. Then came the moment when Emma Weber began to feel the flutter of life within her and exclaimed to Peggy:

"My God! It's alive!"

She stopped working, lost all interest in the outside world, said she had never felt so wonderful in all her life, accepted everything Peggy did for her as her due because she was now a truly important person, the most important kind of person in the world, a mother, the creator and bearer of man. Though the child was not yet born, Emma Weber already felt herself a mother and thought of the child restlessly turning in her womb as a living person, which indeed it was.

It was all a dream, too. She felt more and more passive; all energy abandoned her; she was sleepy most of the time. But whether

fully awake or lost in the drowsy shadows of incomplete sleep, she always thought of the child and saw its unborn face vividly as the idealized face of Otto Weber and herself, and of course it was the face of a boy. Peggy, too, visualized the unborn child and loved it deeply, no longer as the child she wanted so much and could not have, but rather as any child, *the* child, immortal beginning of man, living and wonderful assurance of his future upon the earth.

Emma Weber did not think of the future in such wide arcs, which was a good thing for herself, her child and the world in general; but when she thought of the immediate future, next day, next month or next year, she did so with utter and complete faith. Big-bellied and placid, her full breasts caked with yellow, she sat in the armchair of her little kitchen in the basement, beautiful with rest, contentment and absolute certainty.

"I must not worry about anything," she used to say to Peggy. "I must be a good cow. Nothing must upset *him*. And I *know* everything will turn out all right."

The night Emma Weber lay in bed waiting for the last moment, Siegfried Gross came and said:

"You will go to the hospital tomorrow."

Then Peggy prepared everything for her friend. She filled a suitcase with nightgowns, a toothbrush, a bedjacket, a hairbrush, slippers, a little mirror, powder, lipstick, handkerchiefs and a bottle of Eau de Cologne, and sat up with the "little mother," as she called her, till dawn. At that moment the sack in which the child was wrapped burst asunder, and Emma Weber was frightened, and Peggy calmed her, saying it only meant a longer labor and a dry birth but all the books assured you there was nothing to be afraid of.

It was a hot, close September day and Emma Weber began to perspire all over. The child was kicking very hard now, and after the wonder and glory and joy of it all, she felt the terrible burden of man's emergence into the world, the agony that marks his first moments in it. Her legs were a little swollen; they felt very heavy; the veins stood out on her hands and arms as the blood from within the ultimate depths of her body, from the first, dark, warm habitation of her child, pressed powerfully against all her vessels.

Peggy woke Otto Weber, who was sleeping on the old sofa in the parlor facing the courtyard, and told him the moment had come.

"How do you know?" Otto insisted nervously. Peggy told him. "My God," he exclaimed, "let's get the doctor!"

He was too nervous to phone, so Peggy talked to Siegfried Gross and the doctor said calmly:

"That's fine. Let her stay in bed until the pain comes every half hour. Then phone me at once and take her to the hospital."

Emma Weber lay in bed tense, excited and restless, Otto paced the floor of the room incessantly; he was pale and nervous and smoked one cigarette after another.

"Do you feel all right?" he asked his wife tenderly every few minutes. "Have you any pains? Is there anything I can do for you?"

Emma smiled and tried to quiet him, and Peggy made him break-fast. Emma was too excited to count the frequency of the pains. Some of them were real and some imaginary, and she was not always sure which was which. Peggy kept looking at her wrist watch and time passed at the rate of a thousand years a minute, until at last Emma reported pains every half hour. Otto Weber leaped to the telephone. He called Siegfried Gross, and the doctor, calm as always in his professional work, said:

"Fine. Take her to the hospital. I'll meet you there."

It was now almost nine o'clock and I was about to start for the university. I had spent a restless night worrying more about Peggy than about Mrs. Weber, and now my wife came in to say she was going to the hospital with our neighbors and did not know when she would be back. I kissed her gently and saw there were tears in her eyes. I walked her down the stairs into the street. Otto and Emma Weber were already waiting for her in the cab. She sat down to the left of Emma, who leaned back pale, heavy, enormous and smiled as I wished her the best of luck.

Later Peggy told me the outcome of it all.

On the way to the hospital, Otto Weber, usually a stolid, powerful man without nerves, fidgeted on pins and needles every moment of the journey. Over and over again, torn with anxiety for the precious burden with him, he ordered the taxi driver to go carefully.

"Driver! Please go slow! Can't you find a street without cobblestones? No, this street is no good either. There are too many bumps. Turn in on the next one, will you?"

Meantime Emma Weber kept murmuring her thoughts to Peggy, against whose shoulder she lay clinging in all her fear. She could not visualize the pain she was about to experience; but the idea, so unprecedented, so vast, did frighten her; yet she felt like the heroine of a great drama which was at once terrible and sublime.

At the hospital Otto Weber was ordered to wait in the corridor. Peggy took his wife into the labor room, and there a nurse told the little mother to undress. The two women slipped a hospital gown of white cotton over her and helped her up into the bed, and Peggy went out into the hallway. That was ten o'clock in the morning. Emma Weber was dimly aware of other patients in the room, but all her thought was centered on the child within her. For the next stretch of time—eternity, it seemed, for there was no time whatever

—she felt slight pains and was uncomfortable, but on the whole she felt everything was going well.

"It's happening at last," she thought.

She opened her suitcase and took out a book to read, a light romance to pass the time, but her mind could not take in the words. The nurse came and took care of her; and later, at night, another nurse gave her sleeping pills. During this endless vista of time they fed her, and every twenty minutes Emma would feel her own belly and try to imagine where the baby's head was. She kept looking at the clock to time the pains: six o'clock, slight pain; six-ten, sharp pain with twinge; six-fifteen, was the pain imaginary or real?

All this time, Otto Weber and Peggy waited around the hospital. They were there all day long; they went out to lunch and dinner together, and talked about the great event, and when they returned they visited Emma, and Otto Weber always asked the same questions.

"How are you, Pupperl? How do you feel? How are the pains? Is there anything I can do for you?"

Then he would go out with Peggy into the corridor and begin another long wait.

At night Emma lay all alone in the darkness, surrounded by the immense, unutterable loneliness of a woman faced with the greatest act of her life. And now she was seized with doubt born of fear: Why did I ever do this? Who wants this child anyway? Oh, if I could only undo this whole thing, if I could only be as I was before! She fell into the terrible questions, fears and regrets which assail us all when we face a great act of creation, whether it be the making of a new man, a new art, a new science or a new society; for nothing in this world, however wonderful and good it may be, comes into being without agony and doubt. We move from all chaos to all creation to the trumps of suffering.

It was a long, dry labor and the pains were sharp. She was partly doped, tried to sleep, dozed off and woke again and again; and when she woke in pain, she wanted to scream. But she thought: this can't be it; the real thing must be worse; what can it be like in the end? If you scream now, what will you do later?

From an adjoining room, loud and piercing in the lonely darkness, she heard another cry out in labor:

"Nurse! Nurse! I'm going to die!"

There was a sound of struggle. Something fell to the floor. And again the strange woman's voice rose in the darkness, now far away:

"God! God! I can't stand it!"

Emma was petrified. How gloomy this hospital was! How dim, how stupid, how cruel the light was at the end of her room. She rang

for the nurse and asked for something, anything, merely not to be alone, to have someone by her side. She did not know that her husband and Peggy were waiting in the corridor, reliving all the anguish of her soul in the process of creation, the same process which marked on one scale or another the emergence of the earth from the archaic mists, of Europe from the womb of history, of a new civilization from the sanguinary chaos of our own time.

At dawn Emma rang for the nurse and the nurse called Siegfried Gross; but the patient was too drowsy with drugs and fatigue to see much. She heard the clank of instruments. The pain was acute; a frightful spasm seized her; her womb, man's first source and cradle, began to vibrate as it dilated around the child struggling to enter a world in which he was destined to struggle to the very end. Through the fog of semiawareness, she heard a child crying somewhere and she envied its mother, thinking: it's all over for her; oh, how I wish I were in her place!

And now Emma could stand pain and suspense no longer. She buried her head in the pillow and began to swear wildly—short, forgotten, obscene words she had heard as a girl in the factory, in the Bierstube, at rough dances when she was young, ignorant and voluptuous and thought that life contained only work and pleasure. She cursed the world, herself, the child, and wished she could undo it all, that she could give the child back to chaos, that she could reverse time and translate being back into nonbeing and dissolve the miracle of creation which was too shattering to bear. Then she fell back in exhaustion and dozed fitfully through the night.

At dawn the nurse came and said:

"How do you feel? You are a brave soldier!"

Emma was profoundly impressed by the last phrase, but did not know why; all she could think of was how grand it was to have daylight, to have someone near you. Soon Siegfried Gross arrived, accompanied by a house doctor. The physicians examined her and said:

"It's coming."

Then Peggy entered and kissed her tenderly and asked the doctors whether Otto might come in again, and they said yes, and the little mother put powder and lipstick on her face so her husband might not be alarmed by her appearance. When he finally entered, he was alarmed anyway.

"She looks awful," he whispered to Peggy in a tense voice.

The husband left and Peggy tiptoed out after him and Siegfried asked the mother:

"How do you feel?"

"Terrible. Can't you give the baby back where it came from?"

"It's too late for that," said Siegfried, laughing.

He had heard that many times before, and in this realm of being alone he knew that creation is no easy thing.

Some attendants came in and began to wash the floor with lysol. Barely conscious, Emma looked through the mists of pain at the dead whiteness of the beds and walls. She was utterly, utterly tired; tired in body and mind; tired of everything in the whole wide world, which no longer existed for her. Then the nurse and the attendants rolled her onto the wagon, while the two doctors assembled their clanking instruments.

"Is this it?" she asked feebly. "Will it be over soon?"

"Yes, soon," Siegfried said.

When they rolled her into the delivery room, she looked up and saw the clock on the wall and it said exactly twelve, and she thought: the hour of fate! will my son be born alive? will he be deformed? And her heart sank with dread into the very depths of her being and she closed her eyes over her tears. Then she looked up again and thought: but it's noon! the sun is shining outside! it's the beginning of the day, of life! And she smiled faintly to Siegfried Gross, whom she saw from a great distance at a strange angle, like a distorted figure in a surrealist painting.

I give this all in detail not because it happened to Emma Weber, but because, in another but equally profound way, it happened to Peggy. Watching much of this with her own eyes, hearing the rest of it over and over again from Emma during the weeks following the sublime moment of birth itself, my wife lived the whole thing with an intensity that was not one whit diminished because it was vicarious. Aren't people like us doomed to have many of our greatest experiences in times like these not in our bodies but in our souls, to live by identification with our fellow creatures, to be awed by battles we cannot fight, by spectacles we cannot witness; to suffer agonies which others endure, to sacrifice our lives for hopes whose real secret is in the hands of men whom we shall never see and perhaps never really understand? So Peggy, heavy of heart because some freak of nature had robbed her forever of motherhood, drank avidly from the living fountain of Emma's ordeal, slaking her surface curiosities and deepest needs, suffering when her friend suffered and rejoicing with her in the hour of her greatest glory.

They now rolled Emma onto the delivery table and placed her feet into the stirrups with her legs up, and strapped her arms down as in a crucifixion and told her to bear down as hard as she could, to help her child into the world; for nothing new comes into the world without our love and our labor, without our bearing down as hard as we can upon the creation that is about to spring out of our being; and when the agony became unbearable, the nurses stood

smiling, without pity for the pain, thinking only of the life that was about to emerge with a great shout into the world, and said to her calmly:

"That's good! Try again! Fine!"

Then they placed a rubber bag over Emma's face, and she began to breathe the sweet, alcoholic scent of ether, and she liked it. It slowly intoxicated her, like the May wine she used to drink at the whirling and joyous Heurigen festivals in the spring. She relaxed all the tension of her muscles, her nerves, her thoughts, her very soul; and surrendered peacefully to the nothingness which began rapidly to envelop her like a sweet dreamless sleep. It was wonderful to submit like this, to know that everything was out of her hands, that these strong capable experts around her would take care of all that was coming. O heavenly moment of creation, so lofty, so absolutely right! Through the fading murmur of the voices around her, diminishing, dying, now unheard, she felt without being able to see or name the sublime bright axis around which all life revolved like a great, flaming sphere of faith and hope and love until she was utterly lost in sleep.

Vaguely, uncertainly, through her slowly unfolding awareness, still heavy with dream, she heard a nurse's voice:

"Wake up, Mrs. Weber! You have a lovely baby girl!"

I am drunk, Emma thought; it is all unreal, but you must appear sober. Then she uttered weakly the terrible question that had followed her into sleep and now returned with her into the living world:

"Is it all right? Has it two hands and two feet?"

O heavenly Father, she prayed, may it be perfect and lovely and whole!

For truly, truly, in that hour of conception, when teeming nature is full, there is a flutter and ecstasy about beauty whose approach is the alleviation of the pain of travail.

"Yes, it's a beautiful baby," the nurse said.

Emma opened her eyes slowly. Her head whirled in endless concentric circles, and the room was spinning around and around and she was unable to find her way back to space and time. Her senses still lay heavy and inert under the drug, and all the faces in the room appeared like faces in an unformed dream. But slowly, slowly she became sober. Time and space stood still. She saw she was in a new room, and beside her bed stood Otto and Peggy. They were both smiling, and Otto flushed and beamed with pride, as if he had conquered all the stars in heaven and had brought them down to her in the palm of his hand, an eternal gift to bind them together, indissoluble, one.

But his words were of the simplest, the most homely, the most tender; and he was still more interested in his wife than in his child, asking over and over again the old questions: how she felt, did she have any pains, could he do anything for her. Emma could think of one thing only.

"Have you seen it?" she asked in a tired voice, smiling.

"Yes," he said, trying to appear casual. "It's very cute."

Emma opened her black eyes wide and asked to see her child. The nurse brought the baby crooked in the curve of her arm, covered in white blankets, and revealed its face. The child let out a tiny, piercing yell and settled down to crying. Emma closed her eyes for a moment, afraid to look. She had been warned not to be disappointed.

"They look very ugly at first," mothers had told her.

Now she opened her eyes again and looked at the child crying in the nurse's arms, and her heart leaped high with joy; for the child looked as beautiful and whole as she had dreamed of it. Its face was rosy and pink and white, and its head was perfectly round, and its eyes were closed; for man comes with his eyes shut into a world which in the course of the longest life he seldom sees truly. And, oh, the deep, utter, inexpressible gratification that now filled the whole of Emma's being! This is it, her heart cried out without words; it's a real baby; it's mine; the whole thing is really and truly real, and this thing that is real is greater and more wonderful than the most glorious dream I have ever had!

Then her heart quieted down to a tremendous pride, like a superb actress who, on the opening night of a long-awaited masterpiece, has scored a sensational triumph, an assured success; and since she had not yet touched her child or served it in any way, she enjoyed in all the purity of abstraction the unalloyed rapture of being a mother.

They took the child away. Peggy and Otto kissed the little mother and left, and Emma was alone. All night long she lay thinking of the baby. She had vivid visions of taking it home, of walking with it in the park, and all the time there beat through her mind the intoxicating refrain: it's yours! it belongs to you! its all yours, yours, your very own child!

Next morning the nurse came in with the child in the crooked curve of her arm. Gently, expertly, without emotion, she laid it down at Emma's left side, and dabbed Emma's left nipple with a solution of boric acid, and placed the nipple between the tiny, pink lips of the child who now tasted its first food in the world.

The keenest possible thrill rippled through the whole of Emma's being, a sensual joy that was almost wholly spiritual, an exaltation that far transcended the most rapturous moments of love between

man and woman; and she felt entirely and completely at one with her child who was flesh of her flesh, bone of her bone, blood of her blood, soul of her soul; who was invisible yesterday, lost in the recesses of her womb, and now was out in the world, a person, a living spirit, here, truly here by her side, miraculously alive, suckling her breast, clinging to its new radiant existence through the milk of its mother; and Emma wept happy tears out of the most tremendous joy that ever filled every secret chamber of her heart.

She looked down on the little head, so perfectly round, and on the rosy white face and pink lips suckling and the closed contented eyes and talked to her child, urging it again and again in a tender voice, urging it to eat as she would urge it in the years to come; and letting it hear from its mother's lips the first words of loving human speech, never to be forgotten, always to be searched for in the furious jungles of the world like a great lost jewel of harmony and light.

Afterward there followed those painful weeks at home, the second stage of all creation, the suffering, the sweat, the fear that comes after the first great moment of annunciation, when that which was brought into the world with so much labor and love must be guarded and preserved by the most prosaic mechanics against the ills and dangers that threaten it on every hand. Tired, exhausted, always sleepy from her enormous ordeal, Emma shuffled about her basement apartment washing diapers, cleaning the young, utterly thoughtless animal that was her child; and always she listened for the meaning of its endless cries, to know whether it was hungry, tired, wet, uncomfortable or—heaven protect us!—sick with one of the illnesses that lower over infancy like so many goblins. Sometimes she would leave Otto's side at night, tiptoe to the cradle and in the darkness and stillness of the sleeping metropolis she would listen intently with a frightened heart to the breathing of her child to make sure it was safe and sound and living. Oh, it was hard and painful: man enters the world as a little savage, and Emma was terribly tired and sleepy all the time, and the great burden weighed heavily upon her entire being.

But at the end of three weeks, it was different again. Experience and understanding reinforced love, and Emma began to like the work and the responsibility because all of it was part of her child; and she identified herself thoroughly with her child and was wholly at one with it; and her love increased with every victory over hardship, with every sacrifice she joyfully made for the creature dearest to her in all the beautiful, wide world.

The little girl was baptized in a neighborhood church, Otto and Emma Weber smiled alternately at child and priest, and Peggy and

I stood by as godparents. They named the child Ingrid, in honor of its grandmother; and in honor of the "wonderful Englishwoman," they gave her the middle name of Margaret.

Peggy was overjoyed at the whole proceeding, and for the next few weeks she was a daily visitor at the Webers' at all hours when her work permitted. She helped Emma with various chores, and often stood over the baby's cradle watching its sleep in long, thoughtful silence, her heart full of love for the child because it was a child and because it was her friend's child. She was profoundly pleased when the Webers, cooing to the infant in baby talk, would refer to her as "Auntie Margaret."

Later, when Peggy swung back to her normal routine, a great change came over her. The newspaper work went on as usual, but it was impossible for her to attend a Spanish-aid committee or even to read the briefest item from Madrid without thinking of the conflict in new terms.

"There are no more civilians," she would say at first. "They are killing civilians in the streets just the same as soldiers." After a while she would add: "No, no! It's worse! A soldier is an opponent on equal terms. He has a chance to fight for his life. But they are killing defenseless men and women in their homes!"

After the birth of little Ingrid Weber, the emphasis changed, until it gradually became an obsession which often kept my wife awake at night.

"They are killing children!" she would cry out.

For a long time she did not amplify this utterance, saying it over and over again as a simple and terrible indictment of the barbarians who had revived a sanguinary custom long ago abandoned by the world. But the horrors that transpired on the Iberian peninsula haunted her always; and when she saw photographs of little faces ripped by the enemy's steel; or little bodies, young, helpless, full of a lost future, lying shattered on the streets of a city bombed from the air; and finally, when she grasped in all its frightfulness how hatred kills what love creates, tears welled up in her wide, gray eyes and she could not speak for hours because of the sorrow and rage that oppressed her like a nightmare, incredible, ferocious, inhuman.

One night she woke me from sleep and said:

"A terrible thought worries me, Paul. By their embargo, London politicians have given the Nazis the moral sanction to bomb the babies of Madrid. Aren't they thereby giving them the moral sanction someday to bomb the babies of London?"

I kissed her troubled face and urged her to forget these fan-

tastic thoughts; and soon she fell asleep in my arms. But I could not sleep, and there began to pound at my brain those old questions about the square and the circle, and why every ideal seems so beautiful until it touches reality. Then I wondered what would be the outcome of the aid which democracy was giving to fascism, and exhausted by a problem which seemed to contain no rational answer, I fell asleep and soon was aware of dreaming.

And in my dream I saw at first only utter darkness and through it came the relentless crash of unseen bombs. Amidst this furious detonation, the wind howled insanely. Then all became very still, and light began to dawn slowly, and in that gray silence the rain came down suddenly in torrents. It fell on my hands and face, and I could feel it on my lips and it tasted of salt, as if all the tears the world had ever wept were coming down in a single last deluge. The rain stopped and space was filled only by the light which now became brighter and brighter until it was one great expanse of white; and in this space there appeared a huge black square, its heavy lines enclosing and touching at four points a scarlet circle. Motionless this weird design hung in the white expanse of endless space which filled my dream. Then the square began to press heavily upon the circle, and the air was filled with the low moaning of innumerable voices, lost, invisible and remote, crying faintly all the nameless agonies of the world. And the square pressed heavily upon the circle till large, ponderous scarlet drops fell slowly down into the white space. Suddenly it was very still again, and a great solemnity filled the air, and the circle leaped out of the square and rolled into the expanse of white, rolling endlessly into infinite space, rolling in perfect scarlet circumference. And when it reached the utmost visible horizon at the very last rim of light that filled my dream, the circle vanished with one strange cry that was the cry of a newborn child.

I woke with a start, wet with perspiration. It was still early and Peggy was asleep, her face quiet and lovely in the morning light which fell upon her face like a benediction. I left the house without waking her.

It was from those autumn days that all her work for Spain became concentrated on aiding its children. Even when she urged me to begin my story of democracy, calling it "our baby," she never failed to add that of course all the proceeds must go to the wounded and famished infants of Spain. For her the entire war, upon which so much of the world's future depended, became first and foremost a children's war.

4

*Yes, look at the water grim and black
Where immense Europa rears her head,
Her face pinched and her breasts slack.*
—Allen Tate.

I AGREED TO TELL you everything that came to my mind, doctor, to hide nothing, to falsify nothing; and all I've told you is as true as if I had been confessing with God as my only witness. And yet I have suddenly become aware that what I've been telling you these past weeks must create a false impression.

As you look back on it all, *when* in the past three decades has Europe had a single happy year, a year of prosperity and peace? Never! It's been one long process of disintegration, one mounting climax of catastrophe in which every crime led to a crime still more horrible. That is how it looks to us today from the outside; that is how the drama appears as a whole. Yes, in retrospect, the massacres, bloodpurges and murders on the heights of history present a coherent picture of logical, inexorable doom.

But that is not how things appeared from the inside; that is not how most of us saw the drama while it was taking shape. With rare exceptions, people did not even realize that anything especially important was going on; they did not suspect their life was being completely undermined.

Our pleasant existence seemed to go on as usual. When a sensational event shook the world and cast the shadow of destruction before it, people shrugged their shoulders and assured themselves that it could not possibly interrupt the normal joys of life. The most popular Viennese saying at this time was: *Don't worry, everything will go wrong anyway!*

All this time the *real* life of our citizens (they could not conceive of anything more real) went on in their private homes, their favorite cafés, theaters, concert halls, art galleries, movie houses, offices and courtrooms. The murder of a premier could not long compete for public attention with the latest social scandal, the pursuit of women or the backbiting of aesthetes who concealed their struggle for power under the mask of ideal dreams. As for the

political news, wasn't it in fact dull compared with the brilliant wit, the charming ballads, the marvelously round, voluptuous, wise, powerful and tender face of the celebrated Leopoldi, singing at his piano in the Opera Café or the Ronacher Theater? Then, in the spring, you could always go to the village of Grinzing outside the capital and drink the new wine at the Heurigen festivals and listen to the SchrammERMUSIK of violin, guitar and accordion and watch the hatless, coatless shoemaker's apprentice walking barefoot in the May sunlight carrying customers' boots in his hand past the lovely little provincial church with its onion-shaped cupola. And always there was the truly exciting news as to who was sleeping with whom, who had betrayed whom, who was jealous of whom, who had left whom, who was crazy about whom, who had taken whom away from whom, and all the other aspects of that endless erotic epos which insisted that self-preservation was no more than the second of nature's great laws.

To be sure, the reports that came out of the brown inferno to the north were ominous enough, and even in Vienna you could see men in Tyrolean shorts and white socks prowling around the boulevards, and every schoolboy knew they were Nazis. Equally alarming was the sudden emergence from the lowest depths of our society of a queer movement of hatred and prejudice directed by Father Koch, the one-eyed cleric whom I had met long ago in the company of Uncle Peter at several of Helga's parties.

But there was a truly wonderful consolation in the thought that what had happened to our neighbors could not possibly under any circumstances happen to us. Again and again you met actors and singers, businessmen and journalists in the cafés who used to work in Berlin and were now back home beaming with joy because they were safe. These sang hosannas with absolute confidence in the future: *Thank heaven, we are Austrians!*

As for Spain, that was the preoccupation of a relatively small number of people, and these were often frowned upon for knocking on every door in town with appeals that were considered either dangerous or positively boring. Peggy and I happened to belong to Spain's adherents; and that, perhaps, is how we continued to see the drama from the outside, and to sense the catastrophe which so many of our neighbors persisted in ignoring.

That spring Kurt Hertzfeld unexpectedly arrived from Paris and came to see us at once. He had not changed much essentially, but his sensitive face showed the strain of prolonged work. Yes, there was a change in his appearance. He had abandoned his flannel shirt and red necktie, and now wore the conventional white shirt

with a tie of conservative solid blue. On subsequent visits he sometimes wore a starched collar; and once, dropping in for a cocktail on his way to a dinner somewhere in the Ring, he appeared in the stark black and white of formal attire.

During these visits to our house, Kurt was greatly impressed with Peggy and in turn made an excellent impression on her. As always, his enthusiasm was infectious, and before a week had elapsed he had both of us believing that everything was going to turn out for the best. He confided to us that he had come to Vienna with Hans Bayer on a special mission; the moment it was completed, they were both going to Spain to join the International Brigade. In the end he asked whether he might bring Hans Bayer around. Naturally, I was interested to meet the man of whom I had heard for so many years, whom my father had admired so much and to whom Kurt was attached so profoundly.

It was not easy to get hold of Hans Bayer, however. He shared a room with Kurt in one of the city's better hotels, but was seldom there. Days passed in which Hans moved swiftly, silently, unobserved from one district to another, contacting old workers in the movement who dared not show their faces in the prevailing terror, respectable people who were anxious to help against the brown menace, and even three or four members of the most exclusive social sets who were ready to make common cause against a common foe here and in Spain. We heard of these mysterious doings from Kurt, who dropped in frequently, apologizing for his inability to bring Hans and promising to do so at the first opportunity. We enjoyed these visits of the young poet (it was impossible to think of him as anything but young even at thirty) and I was pleased that Peggy liked him, albeit with the reservations of a sensible Englishwoman who perceived his weaknesses as well as the extraordinary purity of his soul.

Kurt used to spend evenings with us sitting in our library, his blond hair carefully brushed back, his fair, clean, electric face alive with excitement; and his wide, lucid blue eyes sparkling with the love of life that was so peculiarly his; and he would tell us about his life in France, which had already taken its first steps along the deadly road which descends all too easily to Avernus. There a ruler had been assassinated in Marseilles; blood had flowed in the Place de la Concorde; the Sixty Families were fighting with saber tooth and naked claw and all the power of their concentrated wealth against the people; the higher political and army circles stank to high heaven with greed, vanity, corruption and sheer treachery. But at this moment Kurt had faith in the great united movement of the people which had emerged out of the democratic heart of France,

just as he had faith in the people of Spain for whom he was now ready to offer his life on the most critical battlefield of the hour. From these lofty heights of universal history, he would descend to attack a book which Ludwig Hauck had just published and which had created a great sensation in Vienna. This semiofficial, self-appointed spokesman of the Great Experiment had publicly turned his coat of too many colors and had violently repudiated everything and everybody over There.

"The book is selling like wildfire," Kurt said, "partly because the exalted circles of your city and many of the café wits are shocked by the Trials, but also because they resent the one great power which has come to the aid of the Spanish people against their fascist assailants." Then he added ironically: "Herr Hauck is riding high. He is making more money as an enemy than as a friend. Besides, turning renegade has other pleasant emoluments. He is received in the very best society with all the enthusiasm which the corrupt shower upon the treacherous." Kurt reflected for a moment and went on not without some bitterness: "Would you believe it? He goes around from platform to platform, from salon to salon saying that Loyalist Spain is merely the tool of a dangerous eastern power. I don't worry about them over There. They can take care of themselves. But can you imagine stabbing the Spanish people in the back with that kind of falsehood in this hour of their supreme ordeal?"

One night, when Kurt had talked at great length about Spain, Peggy said to him, half in joke, half in earnest:

"But, Kurt, you are mixed up in these things up to your neck. When do you find time to be a poet?"

"This is where the poet belongs!" Kurt exclaimed. "Look at André Malraux, and your own Ralph Fox!" Then he added, smiling: "Anyway, this age is writing a new kind of poetry. A brief newspaper report of the victory of the Spanish Republicans at Guadalajara is more moving than a symphony by Beethoven."

"I am just as thrilled as you are by a victory of the Spanish Republicans," Peggy said. "But why must that exclude Beethoven?"

"It doesn't!" Kurt said triumphantly. "The two go together. And if it will make you any happier, my dear, I'll confess that last year I published a book of poems in Paris."

"Why didn't you tell us about it?" I said, rather put out.

"Because it's nothing to boast about when you think either of Beethoven or the Spanish Republicans," Kurt said, laughing.

The next day Kurt sent us two copies of that book. It was called *Trumpets at Dawn* and the epigraph on the flyleaf was from *Pilgrim's Progress*: I will talk of things heavenly, or things earthly; things moral, or things evangelical; things sacred, or things profane;

things past, or things to come; things foreign, or things at home; things more essential, or things circumstantial: my sword I give to him that shall succeed me in my pilgrimage, and my courage and skill to him that can get it: so he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side. The printed dedication was to Hans Bayer. The copy with which Kurt presented me was inscribed with friendship and that sort of thing; but the copy inscribed to Peggy contained a poem to her which Kurt wrote on the front inside cover in his round, precise script. As usual, I did not care for it as poetry, but was pleased he thought so highly of Peggy, and she was pleased that a well-known poet should compose something especially for her. The inscription read: That so much dies and this should live; that others take and you should give; that bright across this epoch's hell, your heart should flame, a miracle, still certain and still unafraid: this is the wonder you have made; this is the marvel you have wrought, to burn forever in men's thought.

Peggy read these lines and her eyes became moist.

"Thank you, my dear," she said to the poet. "I don't deserve one word of this, but you are very, very kind."

Kurt flushed, obviously embarrassed, and my wife hastened to change the subject.

"Are you ever going to let us meet your Hans?" she said. "We hear about him everywhere we go, but always manage to miss him. They do say he is a remarkable chap."

Kurt's eyes lit with pride.

"He is remarkable," the poet said. Then, turning to me: "It's a pity you did not meet him in the old days. He's had to tone down quite a lot, on the surface anyway."

"What is he like nowadays?" I said.

"Oh, he's basically the same," Kurt said quickly. "It's only the surface that has changed to meet the rapid turn of events. You know: the new line." Then he laughed softly and added: "I think Hans is a little embarrassed by the conservative clothes he has to wear and the general air of respectability we must all adopt, but underneath it all you will still find him the most remarkable man you've ever met."

"If we meet him," Peggy said.

"He's really very busy," Kurt said. "He wants to meet you both, and has asked me a thousand questions about you. But his job comes first, and there's so little time. You *do* understand, don't you?"

The last was said in such an appealing tone, with such obvious anxiety to make Hans appear in the most favorable light, that Peggy and I broke out into loud, friendly laughter.

"Of course we understand," I reassured him.

"We'll be as patient as we can," Peggy added.

But days passed and Hans Bayer did not show up. Then late one Sunday morning the phone rang. It was Helga.

"Paul," she said in a cautious voice, "can you come to the house about noon for late breakfast? I mean *alone*."

"What's the mystery?" I asked.

"Somebody wants to see you—alone."

"Who is it?"

"I can't tell you over the phone."

I hesitated a moment, then said:

"Wait a minute."

I put the receiver against the mouthpiece to cut off all sound and said to my wife:

"That's Helga. She wants me for breakfast at noon—without you. She says somebody wants to see me and she can't tell me who it is."

"You must go, of course," Peggy said.

I lifted the receiver to my ear and spoke into the mouthpiece:

"Very well. I'll be there."

I hung up, got out of bed and began to shave.

"What do you suppose this is about?" I said to Peggy. "Do you think our old friend Egon Fuchs has showed up with another pleasant message?"

Peggy lit a cigarette, leaned her lovely dark head back on the pillow and blew a large, round smoke ring into the air reflectively.

"No," she said. "My guess is you are finally going to meet Hans Bayer."

"You're crazy, my angel," I said. "How would Hans come to be there before visiting us? Who is Helga anyway that he should choose her for a confidential thing like this?"

I was irritated by an obscure sense of having been excluded from something important, then brought in at the last moment through the most unexpected channel.

"Oh, Helga gets around," said my wife. "You don't know the half of it. I have heard things. You are so busy with St. Augustine, Origen, Abélard and all those other frightfully amusing ghosts that you never know what's going on right under your nose. Helga does. She goes everywhere and meets everybody. To her, people are not mere ideas, as most of them are to you. They are really people, and she knows how to handle them."

"Maybe I shouldn't go."

"You've got to go," Peggy said quietly. "There's probably something Hans wants you to do for Spain. That's more important than any of Helga's social intrigues."

By the time I got out into the street and started walking in the sunlight toward Helga's apartment, I felt irritated. Was it true that for me most people were mere ideas, that I never really saw them? Nonsense! Yet, after all these years, what did I really know about Helga?"

Many things came back to me. I knew Helga best during those vague, romantic months of our love affair after the war. In those days I forgot everything I had disliked about her from the first—her nervous desire to dominate everything and everybody; her touching self-love, so touchingly reciprocated; her nameless, vaulting ambition; her snobbish contempt for anybody who was not somebody. All this vanished in those embraces whose voluptuous ardor concealed the lack of true emotion, those kisses in which the body affirmed its uncompromising supremacy over the spirit.

I was now walking along the Ring and the golden June sunlight flashed on shaded windowpanes and across glittering church spires. But soon Helga's face obscured all this. I don't know why I was obsessed by her this morning. Perhaps it was her emergence in circles which all my life I had identified with my father and his friends; perhaps it was my sudden realization that a truly happy marriage had at last liberated me from the woman who now possessed my thoughts in a wholly new way.

What had happened between me and Helga after I returned from Paris? That had always puzzled me. Is it true there is a relation not seldom seen in society, when two persons who remain externally on friendly terms, despise each other to such a degree they cannot even take each other seriously, and cannot even be offended by each other? No, I do not think Helga and I despised each other that much; though underneath all our sentimentality about our youth together and all our externally friendly relations we did despise many things about each other. It was something else at bottom, that was clear now. I was afraid of Helga. I kept her as a friend because I was afraid of having her as an enemy. After her marriage to the old count, and even more after her marriage to Ritter, Helga became a real force in Vienna society. The very qualities which I despised in her were her greatest assets. She loved power and knew how to get it, and that was hardly a woman for a college professor to offend. She could advance your position in society and she could annihilate you like a fly. That kind of force must be placated.

I resented having to placate her; and resented even more that a woman without any genuine love for anything or anybody, with nothing but a naked will that suffered only when it could not govern,

should be in a strategic social position where men of thought and men of action alike had to placate her, maintain her good will, flatter the relentless queen whose iron whim was law, whose capricious cry *Off with his head!* might diminish one's prestige and even spell one's utter ruin.

We all knew how badly she needed us. In Vienna, certainly, men of thought lent a necessary aura to the salon of the rich and powerful social maharanee. But her power was like all external power. She needed us in the aggregate but did not need any one of us in particular. And like every despot, the social tyrant can always count on destroying an offender to the relieved and jealous plaudits of his colleagues, who are delighted to remain in the privileged entourage and equally delighted to see the beloved friend and secretly hated rival break his neck with a resounding crash, preferably in public.

The church bells began to peal across the city as the crowds came out of the last Mass. How beautiful the sunlight was among the green leaves of the trees that lined the brilliant boulevards! I was entering the section where only people as wealthy as Helga could afford to live, and my thoughts reverted to her.

Yes, she was a strange woman in many ways. She had no children and no desire for them. She had no real love, and no desire for that, either; she never cared for anyone for his own sake, but only for what he could do to advance her ambition. People truly in love tend to conceal their feelings from the world; they are anxious to guard the precious object of their devotion from harm and the sanctity of their love from profanation. But precisely because Helga knew love only as a word that one was expected to use, she always flaunted her synthetic liaisons in public, and insisted upon attracting attention either by praising a man to the skies or tearing him to pieces, with equal injustice, before an amused coterie. And now, thinking about all this as I walked toward her house, it seemed to me that millions of miles separate those who seek power to implement their love and those who seek love to implement their power.

What did Helga really want? She was madly pursuing, without reason and without rest, every chimera that promised to slake the endless thirst of her self-centered will; but she always looked for some external thing to perform that miracle: this man's charm, that man's money, the other man's fame; a social triumph, a political intrigue, the dernier cri, the very latest hullabaloo in art; anything and everything that could intoxicate her with a sense of importance and the illusion that she was happy; anything and everything except an honest examination of her heart and its resurrection from within

through candor and love, be it for a child, a man, a cause, an idea or an art.

And do you think she was unaware of what she was doing? It was I who was utterly stupid about the actual values of the external world; she never concealed her motives or her goals. I remember how once, when Ritter was still alive, she described for me a quarrel she had had with him. Talking in that profuse, nervous, deeply ungratified way of hers, she quoted herself as follows:

"Don't cross me, Ritter, I said to him. We women are cleverer than you men, and we can defeat you every time.—Do you really consider yourself my superior? he said.—Yes, I said, really. I've never seen a man without knowing I am his superior.—You're sick with the lust for power, he said.—Am I? I said, well, then, yes! What is there in life except power? You men have monopolized it long enough, and now we women are going to give you a taste of your own medicine!"

I was rather terrified by this tirade.

"You talk like a character out of Strindberg," I said.

"Do I?" said Helga. "I don't know Strindberg."

"He didn't know you, either, which makes it all the more remarkable."

"What's remarkable?" she said.

"You are."

She smiled, utterly placated, taking that as a compliment.

But do you know, doctor, I now realize it *was* a compliment! Secretly, deep in my heart, I admired Helga; what was worse, I admired her for the very things which caused me to despise and fear her. Weren't we all like that, all the men of thought and art who fawned on her? It goes without saying that she looked down from her exalted heights with the most profound contempt on my father the moment she saw he was no longer a figure in the theater. As for his friends in Floridsdorf, they were beneath contempt. But among writers, artists and savants, her yardstick was external success. What interested her in these men was not the original idea, the profound composition, the inspiring word, but the laurels which the exalted circles of the city placed upon his head; and her chief ambition was that the wreath should be placed on the victor's brow by no hand but her own. Yes, I knew this, despised it, feared it—and admired it. Like most of my colleagues, I had a secret respect for the very kind of surface power which my spirit so ardently repudiated.

Why hadn't I seen all this before? What drew down so dark a veil over these simple banalities and obscured them in the heavy folds of forbidden mystery? Fear? Yes, I was afraid of Helga; but

I was also afraid of myself; most afraid, perhaps, to be assured that one of our leading Viennese psychologists was not entirely wrong when he insisted that in every one of us there is something which makes us want to be top dog.

But there was that other law to blind me, too; the law which made it impossible for most people to see the approaching historical catastrophe, so glaring and obvious to me. For the drama of Helga, like the drama of Europe, did not appear all at once in stark and startling outline full of terror and pity. Each episode, isolated, undeciphered, was lost in the routine of daily living, and the very essence of her being was exactly what struck me for years as being utterly inessential. If, in spite of the most ominous warnings, we continue to be blind to the most enormous forms of greed, envy, revenge and lust for power which dominate the heights of history, what are we to see in the simple, normal movements of everyday life, in the people whose prejudices and aims we share, and, for that matter, in ourselves?

After all, no serious scandal had ever marked Helga's life. She had never destroyed a state or killed a man or unleashed a war or stolen anybody's money or committed any of those little offenses which Europe's statesmen accepted as a matter of course. She was by all normal standards an intelligent woman and a moral one who played the game according to the rules; and if she managed to wear the finest clothes, to run a brilliant salon and pull the most important wires in the country, that was her good fortune. Certainly, the historian preoccupied with the problem of power among the Caesars, Hohenstaufens and Bonapartes could not but dismiss as utterly trivial Helga's intrigues to capture this literary lion, that lover or this politician for her endlessly changing entourage. I was unable to see the wood for the trees or to remember that, whether you see it in the wide expanse of the sea or in a little glass tumbler, water is always H_2O ; and that power, like love, has its own laws regardless of its object. And now, walking along that sunlit street, I thought of Helga's old world, those salons in which she used to gather Tory politicians, arrogant army officers and fawning intellectuals; I thought of those cold faces and cold hearts and knew the real nature of the fear I no longer felt. Now, at last, I strangled the serpent that lurks in every heart, whispering adroitly: the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light; for while the serpent speaks truth, it is also true that without the children of light, often foolish in their generation but wise across the centuries, the world would perish.

That was over. But now I was faced by a new paradox. For its own unfathomable purposes, history had made a strange and un-

expected use of Helga's lust for domination. She had moved out of the titled aristocracy into Ritter's industrial world; from there she had gone on to that world of intellect and knowledge which followed the countinghouse as foam follows the wake of a mighty ship; and now she was moving in circles which used to surround my father when he was alive and whose main purposes had once been the object of her loftiest contempt. Naturally, my wife was right when she said that in as great and vital a cause as that of Spain, one must not look too closely at the past of those who wanted to help; that it was possible for people to turn over a new leaf (our Magdalene!) and that even if they did not actually reform, allies in every conflict must be judged not for what they were, are and will be forever, but for what they do for us in the course of battle. Yet, if it should turn out to be true that waiting for me at that moment in Helga's apartment was either Egon Fuchs or Hans Bayer, what was I to make of this unexpected paradox?

You see what we were like in those days, doctor. After all the immense catastrophes which, year after year, had stormed across the world for a quarter of a century, I was still capable of being disturbed by minor puzzles which could not in any way alter the main stream of history.

I had reached Helga's apartment house. Walking up the stairs and into the hallway, I rang the doorbell of the lady who, to meet the needs of the moment, had resumed her former name, and now called herself once more the Countess zu Fassenheim, one of the oldest and most respected titles on the Continent, green with the rich patina of a thousand years of Europe. I heard her footsteps approaching the door, and there flashed through my mind the queer, irrelevant thought: Europe itself has from time immemorial bled to death again and again for some form of power, only to be resurrected by some new form of power. . . .

5

*It is the tragi-comedy of the sensitive;
Or rather, the strangle hold of history.*
—Frederic Prokosch.

THE SCARLET CREPE housegown clung tightly to Helga's voluptuous figure, revealing every line and curve of her body; yet the net effect was one of austerity. The long, flowing, red sleeves reminded you of a cardinal, and the absence of all decoration emphasized the legend of the Magdalene. At the tag end of her thirties, Helga was radiant with a ripe, mature beauty. Her pale white face was serene this morning and there was a look of unaccustomed composure in her blue eyes. She ushered me into the dining room.

"Make yourself comfortable, Paul; he'll be in directly," she said, assuming there could be no possible doubt whom she meant.

I relaxed in an armchair, lit a cigarette and watched Helga's scarlet figure hovering around the long dining table. A man came in from the interior of the apartment, freshly shaved, the talcum powder still visible on his severe face. He wore no jacket, his white shirt was freshly laundered and he was knotting his dark-green tie with quick deft movements of his stubby fingers.

"Good morning!" he said cheerfully, looking first at Helga, then at me. "This is a pleasure to which I have been looking forward for a long time, Professor Schuman. I'm Hans Bayer."

I rose and we shook hands. He looked just as Kurt had described him to me once: of medium height, well-built, broad-shouldered, strong-faced, clean-shaven, gray-eyed, yet so simple and commonplace in general appearance that you wondered what there was in this man for the poet to worship.

"Excuse me a moment," he said, smiling. "I must get my jacket."

He disappeared into the hallway, obviously at home here. I could not refrain from asking Helga point-blank how she had met him.

"Oh, that!" she said, with a blue gleam of subdued triumph in her eyes. "Last week I heard him address a meeting. He's a marvelous speaker, Paul! I went up to him afterward and told him so.

He said he had heard all about me and had admired me from a distance for a long time. He invited me for chocolate at the Café Bristol. Later I invited him here." She laughed gaily. "He's been living here ever since. Simple, isn't it?"

"Very."

"He's adorable," she said, her eyes becoming earnest.

Hans Bayer returned, wearing a light-gray spring sports jacket. Our poet was mistaken. Hans was not at all embarrassed by his fine clothes; he wore them well and felt quite at home in them.

Helga sat down at the head of the long table covered with the finest white linen softened by that beautiful convent embroidery whose making ruins the eyes of young novices. She placed Hans at her left and me at her right. I could not help wondering why she had excluded Peggy and where Kurt was.

"It's very nice to meet you at last," I said to Hans Bayer. "I used to hear a great deal about you from my father."

"Ah, there was a man," Hans said with genuine respect.

A servant entered with a tray and began to place things on the table. Helga sent her away.

"I'll serve," she said, smiling at Hans; and in her glance there was a light I had never seen there before.

She served us crisp warm rolls and little ridged butterballs on ice. From the silver urn that stood over the little alcohol stove with the blue flame, she poured us steaming hot coffee, handing the first cup to Hans. Then she served us boiled eggs in small silver cups with tiny mother-of-pearl spoons which the yolk cannot tarnish.

Hans sat there perfectly at ease, detached, self-contained. Soon he began to ask me questions. They were cautiously formulated, casual, sometimes ironical; and I found myself, heaven knows why, answering them freely and at great length, as though I recognized at once his right to ask them. First he wanted to know about my work and my colleagues at the university; then he asked about various people I knew around town. The questions always moved toward a single goal at which his single, inflexible purpose aimed without variation. Was this one active in a Spanish committee? Was that one busy with anti-Nazi work? Could So-and-so be prevailed upon to contribute money for an ambulance which Madrid needed badly?

I could not help noticing that, unlike my father, and certainly unlike Kurt, this man's preoccupations were, on the surface at least, almost wholly practical. He uttered no generalizations, played with no abstract ideas, promulgated no universal assumptions; but, grappling with immediate things that absolutely had to be done, spoke of them in the quiet assurance that the great basic things had

already been settled and it was no use wasting time proving all over again that two and two make four. He ate his breakfast with serene and deliberate movements, talking cautiously and listening much, and pretending to ignore Helga, who hung on every word he said with unaccustomed reverence in her eyes. At the end of an hour, it was evident that he knew much more about the political life of our city than I did, and that he asked all those questions either to be polite, or to kill time until he was ready for the real object of our interview, or to sound me out, or merely to check on what he already knew.

The whole thing was puzzling. Our talk was pleasant enough, but was it for this he had excluded Peggy and Kurt? I was annoyed with him. Yet, as time passed, I could not help feeling he was a unique personality. It was not anything he said, for Hans Bayer had a way of maintaining long silences in which he listened carefully without making any comment; or else he would speak calmly and slowly about trifles which deliberately barricaded the way to the real thoughts that filled his mind. It was rather that his reserve could not conceal the extraordinary strength of will and moral equilibrium which vibrated from every pore of a being as rugged and inflexible as iron. There was a fanatical quality about him, too, as there had been to some extent in my father, as there definitely was in Kurt; but that was tempered by the unexpected and reassuring tolerance of a man who seemed more interested in realities and goals than in philosophical differences. He had a keen social tact, too. Before the breakfast was over, we were calling each other by our first names, though at certain moments he took a peculiar pleasure in calling me *professor*.

Curiously enough, in that casual, impersonal, wholly unrhetoical way of his, Hans Bayer managed to convey a sense of the immense swing in modern history across the ineluctable present toward distant, incalculable shores. He was particularly effective when he spoke of the great popular movement in France, where he had been active during the past few years, and its counterpart the world over. It was at such moments that Helga became most alive, her blue eyes shining with confidence and gratification. Who knows, perhaps the secret lay here. It was not only Hans Bayer's stanch will that affected her; she had known many strong men in her time. It was rather that Hans exuded the assurance that he represented the future; not the remote future of which my father used to dream and which still agitated Kurt's imagination like the afterimage of an irrevocable event, but the immediate future; not the next century, but next year, next week, today; and clearly, surely, Helga believed with all her heart that this future contained for her that prestige

and power for which she had longed so passionately and so blindly all these years.

Sitting there this bright Sunday afternoon at the head of the long, linen-covered table, passing us coffee, cakes or cigarettes, her entire personality seemed to be transformed. I had never seen her so meek. She hardly said a word, and when she did speak, her voice purred with happy submission to a will which she at last was able to recognize as superior, more worthy and more fruitful than her own. This gave her face a look that was nearly pure, so that it almost resembled the face of a woman in love. It was then I noticed in Helga something so simple and human that it could have escaped the notice only of a bookworm like myself. She was approaching forty. Among all the factors which had mellowed her will and clipped the claws of her shapeless ambition, perhaps the strongest was time. She looked upon Hans Bayer not only as a possible avenue toward the power she craved, but also as a rock of refuge against the unknown terror of a woman's autumn years. Old-fashioned in her search for victory through men, she finally had a man whose identity with the future granted her the assumption that she would not fall when the past fell.

After breakfast we went into the salon, the last place in the world I had ever expected to see Hans Bayer. The immense room was voluptuous with color; and against that symphony of gray, silver, black and green, Helga's scarlet robe was a startling center of flame. She sat down on a streamlined sofa against the wall. Above her pale-gold head hung an enormous plate-glass mirror which reflected the huge candelabra and the semimodernist furniture from the Wiener Werkstätte. There was a large fireplace at each end of the room. Over one of these hung a portrait of Helga's mother by Gustav Klimt, done in the exquisite, decadent style of the nineties; and on the mantelpiece over the other there crouched a large black panther, carved out of ebony, whose green jeweled eyes blazed with vigor and malevolence.

Hans sat down on the sofa near Helga, and I took a chair opposite him. From where I sat, I could see across the salon a painting by Chirico showing a Greek temple on the edge of a brilliant blue sea with a white horse prancing out of an invisible antique frieze into the nostalgic imagination of the twentieth century. Time stood still in those pale shapes and colors, haunted by the desperate recollection of a realm that never was on land or sea but whose image has never ceased to burn in Europe's heart since the twilight of the classic world. Hans Bayer looked around the room with evident satisfaction. He lit a long, black cigar and offered me one. I declined and, with Helga's permission, lit my pipe instead.

"Now, Professor Schuman," Hans said cautiously, "I think we can get down to business."

He did have an object. I cleared my throat but said nothing. Helga rose from the sofa and said, smiling:

"If you gentlemen will excuse me . . ."

Hans and I rose and bowed. Her scarlet figure vanished through the door and we resumed our seats. Had she left us alone by pre-arrangement? Or had her new and unexpected attachment given her this sensitive tact? Hans turned to me with impressive directness.

"Is there any possibility," he said, "of your introducing me to Herr Peter Hauser?"

"My uncle?" I said.

"Yes. I've managed to meet everybody I've wanted to meet here. But he's a slippery fellow. I haven't been able to get near him."

"You can see him very easily. He works at the National Library."

"I know that," Hans said. "But I'd rather not meet him so informally. It's important that I come to him well introduced."

"Why didn't you have our friend Kurt introduce you? My uncle is very fond of Kurt."

"Is he?" Hans said dryly. "I'd rather leave Kurt out of this."

His strong, rather lined face (he could not have been over forty) was utterly impassive. Now he smiled and his gray eyes lit up with amusement.

"There's a delicate matter that must remain a secret," he said. "It's best to keep it among ourselves—and your uncle, of course. That's why I asked you to come alone."

"I am listening," I said.

"Have you ever heard of a man named Father Koch?"

"The tall, one-eyed cleric with the bald head?"

"Yes."

"I've met him. He's a friend of my uncle's."

"That's the point," Hans said in a businesslike tone. "Father Koch runs some kind of secret organization here which preaches the doctrine of Hitler in the name of Christ."

"That's quite a combination," I said.

"A very dangerous one, and false from top to bottom. But it's making headway, and we've got to fight it before it undermines your republic and opens the gates to the Nazis."

"What can I do about it?"

"Your job is very simple," Hans said. "I want you to introduce me to your uncle, and I want him to take me to one of Father Koch's subterranean meetings."

"That ought to be easy," I said. "And it seems to me your friend Kurt ought to join us."

"Now, now, professor!" Hans said soothingly, and he uttered the title with genuine respect. "We must not take these things personally. Everyone is assigned to the work for which he is best suited."

"What's wrong with Kurt?" I said.

I felt myself becoming rather belligerent but did not know how to stop. Hans Bayer's attitude toward his friend came to me with something of a shock. Was it possible that Kurt had all these years been living an illusion, that his attachment to Hans and everything he stood for was one-sided?

"Kurt is a fine chap," Hans said. "But he's a poet."

"What's wrong with that?" I persisted

"A poet is everything and nothing. He is fit for some things and not for others, and he's usually not very discreet. This is a delicate matter. It requires great tact and common sense. It would be disastrous if it were discovered at the meeting who I am."

"Kurt admires you more than any other man in the world," I said.

Hans smiled indulgently as to a child who could not possibly understand the rough ways of reality.

"I like Kurt very much," he said. "I also like to hear the birds sing. But birds cannot clear the jungle, drive out the beasts of prey and create instead a Garden of Eden for mankind."

I felt more put out than ever. This conversation seemed to alter the picture I had had for some time of the relations between the poet and his hero. Or was I reading into this minor episode elements which did not belong to it at all? I can't say why, but the idea of exclusion disturbed me profoundly. It is a painful thing for anyone on any level. The child who fails to get a Christmas gift, the woman who fails to receive an invitation which she wants to have the pleasure of declining, the soldier who fails to hear his courage praised on the day when decorations are awarded, the painter who is not asked to show his work in the retrospective exhibit, the politician who is not named to the committee, the poet who is kept out of the anthology, the son who is cut off in his father's will—everyone at some time feels the pang of being ignored or belittled by those upon whom he depends for understanding and approval, of being left out in the cold, as the saying goes. In Kurt's case it was worse because of his extreme attachment for the man who now excluded him. Were there serious reasons for this?

"There seems to be some basic difference of outlook between you and Kurt," I said. "I am surprised. I thought he followed you in everything."

"He does," said Hans simply. "Fundamentally, yes. But he is

one of those romantic natures who cannot touch an idea without casting over it a fantastic glamour as misleading as it is attractive. He lived with you for a year, didn't he?"

"He did."

"Weren't you amused—as a historian, I mean—by some of his fantastic notions?"

"I disagreed with many of them," I said, "but despised none."

"You surprise me, Professor Schuman," said Hans. "Don't you realize that at bottom Kurt is an idealist? His heart's in the right place and he is useful to us in his own way, but he believes in all kinds of nonsense—the sovereignty of thought, eternal truth, the historic power of ethics. Why, he even believes there is such a thing as a real human morality which is superior to class morality!"

"Don't you?"

"Are you joking, professor?" said Hans. "Real human morality superior to class morality and its traditions will not be possible until a stage in human history has been reached in which class antagonisms have not only been overcome, but have been forgotten as regards the conduct of life."

That sounded like a quotation from the Founding Fathers, and I knew Hans was not really willing to argue the point, but accepted it as incontrovertible dogma. Besides, he was becoming expansive at last, and I was very anxious to hear what he had to say.

"Do you know what Kurt once told me?" Hans went on. "He said he wants to see the face of man under all his masks! But don't you see? What he calls the masks are the successive faces of man in his evolution through the ages. That boy is obsessed with all kinds of vague ideas. He believes in abstract freedom and abstract equality. He is simply incapable of grasping the fundamental fact of our time, that the only possible equality which modern society can achieve is the abolition of classes. Every demand for equality transcending this is necessarily absurd."

I had heard my father say that once. Then it sounded like a great hope. The way Hans said it made it somehow sound like a great limitation. I lit my pipe and listened attentively.

"Look at Kurt's conception of history!" Hans went on. "Why, he misses the whole point!"

"What is the whole point?" I said.

"Simple enough. The whole of history up to the present time is to be regarded as the history of the period extending from the practical discovery of the transformation of mechanical movement into heat to that of the transformation of heat into mechanical movement."

"You're a lucky fellow, Hans," I said. "To think that you've re-

duced all the struggles and sufferings of humanity to a simple statement in physics. Or perhaps you have simply taken that statement out of someone else's context?"

Hans rose from the streamlined sofa and came over to me. His face was serious, thoughtful and reserved; and his gray eyes watched me keenly in silence for a while. Then he said:

"Look here, Paul. That *was* a quotation, and it must be taken in the whole of its original context. But don't get any foolish ideas. I'll tell you something without quotations. I'm just as moral as the next man, and I'd like very much to live in a world of absolute equality. But dreams are dreams, and facts are facts. Actually, we are living in a jungle. Don't forget the youth of humanity. Dreams are pleasant enough. But if we acted upon them, the beasts of the jungle would crush our bones one by one, and sink their teeth into us, and devour us until not one shred of us is left, dreams and all. Of course, it's any man's privilege to die a horrible death believing in his abstract wishes. But how is that going to help the world? It will remain a jungle, and that jungle will be governed by beasts of prey, and you won't be one whit nearer to the equality and morality you desire. Quite the contrary. Do you for one moment imagine the vultures will listen to your moral sermons or give one hoot in hell for your dreams of equality? You can laugh all you want at what you call *physics*; but believe me, the world can free itself from the beasts of prey and start moving toward a real human morality only through the transformation of heat into mechanical movement. So far the Sermon on the Mount has failed to make the world better; but unless we annihilate the brown menace root and branch, first by strategy, then by force of arms, there won't be any Sermon on the Mount to inspire you or Kurt or anyone else!"

I refilled my pipe in silence and started to walk around the room. The blue sea in Chirico's painting was as still as death, but you could sense the nameless agitation stirring in its unseen chasm. I stopped in front of Hans Bayer and said curtly:

"See here, I want to make one thing absolutely clear. I'm not going to argue history with you."

"Why not?" said Hans. His eyes sparkled with amusement and I could see he was teasing me, but I fell into the trap just the same.

"Very well," I said. "Many a modern man is a materialist, an atheist. Yet, being a man, he requires in the depths of his heart a world system, a faith in the future, an organized society, a hierarchy, a sense of righteousness—in short, all the essentials of religion except the old dogmas. He requires a church along strictly nineteenth century lines. Where can he go? To you! Oh, yes, you change.

Sometimes you follow one strategy, then its opposite; sometimes you fight in the open, and sometimes you keep quiet; sometimes you are compelled to make pacts with the devil, and sometimes you must crawl into the farthest recesses of the catacombs, like the early Christians."

Hans was laughing softly. His gray eyes looked steadily at me, and he went on laughing softly, and I stopped in embarrassment.

"Don't stop, my dear professor!" he said ironically. "You fascinate me. Please go on!"

"All right," I said, "I will go on. You will change many of your original aims and acquire new aims, but you will continue as a great church. And across the centuries to come, there will arise in your midst, as there arose in the midst of that other great church, saints and careerists, idealists and criminals, all manner of men and women, some of them unspeakably vile like Alexander Borgia, some incredibly pure like St. Francis, and most of them ordinary good men and women who want the dream and do not know the terrible price at which every great dream is pursued. And your powerful realm, temporal and spiritual, will go on living who knows how long. Perhaps a thousand years, perhaps more. And the scientists within it will give it a scientific aspect; the businessmen, a trading aspect; the politicians will run its hierarchy; the poets will sing its glories; the heretics will denounce its crimes; and the devotees will love it without question, with boundless love and unthinking sacrifice, as Kurt does today."

I took out my handkerchief and wiped the sweat which bathed my forehead. Hans was smiling, imperturbable as ever.

"Ah," he said gently, "at last we are down to earth again. At last Kurt is a real and tangible person, and not a metaphysical phantom."

"Certainly he is a real person!" I said. "And he has all the sensibilities of a real person intensified in the soul of a poet, and you are leaving him out of our project."

"I must."

"I am to keep this secret from him, then."

"Definitely."

"I am to betray him."

Hans put his hand on my shoulder kindly and said in a low, barely audible voice:

"You are needlessly wrought up, professor, and you are making a mountain out of a molehill. Kurt has been left out of many things. He understands his role in the movement perfectly. It is definitely not that of a practical politician."

"Why do you take me along, then?"

"You're a little better than Kurt," he said, laughing. "Not much better, but just enough." Then he added severely: "And I can't get to Father Koch's meeting without you."

"Have it your way," I said. "I'll speak to my uncle about it."

It took me two weeks to arrange the matter. At first my uncle was suspicious about taking a stranger to a place he had himself never visited and knew nothing about; but I finally persuaded him that Hans was a good friend of mine who could be absolutely trusted, and that there would be no unpleasant consequences. My uncle was an old friend of Father Koch's and had no trouble obtaining an invitation for one of his meetings. The cleric was delighted to have him bring me and accepted Hans Bayer on faith.

"I want everyone to hear my sacred, revolutionary message," Father Koch said, coupling in one phrase the antipodes of nineteenth century values.

Hans and I set a date with my uncle for one of Father Koch's mysterious gatherings, which were difficult to attend despite his blanket invitation to "everyone"; and arranged to dine together beforehand on the appointed night.

Naturally, I told Peggy everything. Hans Bayer's attitude toward Kurt surprised her at first, as it had surprised me; but in the end her English common sense and her training as a journalist prevailed; she said the requirements of action transcend all personal sentiment. Kurt came to see us frequently during the weeks that followed, and at first I felt rather awkward in his presence, and even downright shabby. But one night he brought Hans Bayer and Helga to dinner. They both came in formal attire, as they had a date at the Opera afterward with some very distinguished people, and they brought a large bouquet of the finest roses for my wife. By the time the meat was served, Peggy was enchanted with Hans. His dry humor and practical turn of mind appealed to her, and the iron will that made itself felt in every syllable and gesture cast a spell over us all. Kurt kept his eyes riveted on Hans Bayer's face and listened to him with pride and confidence. Hans, in turn, was very affectionate toward the poet. There was no mistake about it; he genuinely liked Kurt and was proud of his literary attainments. I began to feel I had misunderstood the real meaning of Hans Bayer's decision about the meeting. It was neither a slight nor a betrayal to exclude Kurt from our venture, just as it was neither a slight nor a betrayal to exclude Peggy. It was simply a matter of serious political business in which each was assigned to his post in accordance with his capacities and the requirements of the occasion. I began to feel foolish for the nervous distortion I had given the

whole affair and rebuked my imagination for overleaping the bounds of common sense.

Hans was cordial that evening not only to Kurt, but to Peggy and myself as well; and his attitude toward Helga was one of quiet, affectionate possession. The couple visited us again the following week, and this time Hans told Peggy how many wonderful things he had heard about her in Paris. The story of her arrival with aid for the men, women and children in Floridsdorf had reached him from various quarters at that time. People had written him letters praising her efficiency and kindness of heart and, with the air of an officer decorating a soldier for gallantry in action, Hans said he was pleased with her work in those days. He hastened to say that he was hearing equally fine things about her work on behalf of the Spanish children, that he liked people who concentrated on one line of work instead of running around from task to task like dizzy dilettantes; and promised to discuss some special aspects of the work with her very soon.

At last the night of our appointment with Uncle Peter arrived. My uncle, Hans and I dined together in a small restaurant in one of the poorer sections of the city. Hans had no difficulty in charming my uncle. He had picked up a great deal of impressive gossip about the external life of the church and its leading personalities in various parts of Europe, and before long the two men seemed to be excellent friends, especially since my uncle did not have the slightest idea who Hans Bayer really was. Afterward we started out for Father Koch's meeting, for which Uncle Peter had all the necessary directions.

On a dark side street in the slums, we stopped in a small dingy café. Uncle Peter whispered something to the plump, unshaved man behind the bar, and the man took us through a side door into a dimly lit hallway. We followed him down endless shadowed stairs that narrowed, curved and twisted into unexpected depths of the ancient building until we reached the cellar. Through a small barred window near the ceiling I could see we were now below the level of the street. We followed our plump, anonymous guide along the acrid, badly lit cellar until we reached another door. Then we made our way cautiously in absolute darkness down a short flight of stairs, and soon I heard our guide knocking four times slowly on what sounded like a heavy iron door.

6

They seek not priests, but rhetoricians; not stewards of souls, but keepers of money; not pure sacrificers, but strong champions. I will make some excuse for them. It is we who have trained them thus; we have become all things to all men, I know not whether that we may save them or destroy them all.

—*St. Gregory's Farewell to Constantinople.*

THE HEAVY IRON DOOR opened slowly; we heard the murmur of voices and smelled the acrid fumes of tobacco. A queer face, haggard and expressionless, inclined a large, thick ear toward our guide who whispered something I could not hear. We were permitted to enter, and our guide left us at once, vanishing into the darkness from which we had just emerged. I heard the heavy bolt screech as the door was locked behind us.

Suspended from the center of the ceiling, a huge lamp revealed a long, gloomy cellar converted into a meeting hall. Seated on folding chairs and crowding along the walls were about a thousand people. They were tightly packed together in that subterranean cavern, all of them sweating, restless, excited. From the spot where we stood near the door, I could see that most of them were simple people exhausted by the day's trials. They were illiterate men and women from the poor districts, and their faces were the most vacant and hopeless in Vienna. I had seen many of that kind around town on streetcars, in cheap cafés, in government offices collecting unemployment doles. They were those whose goodness had been mangled by the chaos of the past two decades, and whose eyes now stood utterly still in the wide wilderness of ignorant despair. Their blank faces depressed me. How could you reason with these people? It was too late. Their minds were closed by unresolved desperation, their hearts beyond all appeal except that of senseless revenge.

I could hear my uncle clear his throat nervously. Hans Bayer was impassive.

Soon I noticed in a corner of that gloomy cellar a group of men and women who stood out from the rest, and the moment I realized

what they were, a shudder ran through my entire being. At various times in my life, I had known unfortunates robbed by nature or accident of sight, speech or hearing; a leg, an arm, a straight back; and in these I had seen the most sublime triumph of the human spirit over adversity. Suffering had sharpened their minds, mellowed their hearts and filled their faces with the light of forgiveness, understanding and love. And now, for the first time, I saw in Father Koch's subterranean sanctum faces so ravaged by malice that their malign resentment almost obscured the twisted bodies, the eyeless sockets and the empty sleeves. They were leering, unshaved faces with gaping mouths and black teeth from which the saliva dribbled in obscene expectation. And I noticed among these a small group of the deaf and dumb whose stubby, cruel fingers wove strange ciphers in the smoke-filled air, while their harsh eyes rolled in the glory of evil, and their voices, wordless like the cry of animals, hooted to each other across the room breathless with a mysterious, vile passion that cursed their fate and moaned for a nameless salvation at any cost.

Hans Bayer, standing close beside me, whispered in my ear:

"Very clever. They've gathered in a few of the halt, the lame and the blind. In their name it is easier to advance the intrigues of the powerful."

I looked again across the gloomy cellar. Scattered among the crowd were about a dozen women with tight, painted faces and a film over their eyes; and about thirty or forty men with powerful shoulders and relentless features gnarled with fear and corruption. You could see them in various parts of the room dominating the whole atmosphere. Now and then I caught a word in the subdued tumult of speech that floated about us, some bitter word about the world we live in, a word loaded with spite, hatred and revenge, which, unknown to them, echoed the cry of the Archfiend: *Evil, be thou my good!*

We were still standing near the iron door. The man with the thick ears, who had bolted it behind us, said gruffly:

"Stay here. I'll call Father Koch."

He slipped through the crowd and soon I lost sight of him. By my side Hans Bayer was surveying the room with absolute composure. His gray eyes took in the strange mixture of faces as if he had expected just this, and no smile or shadow disturbed the severe, silent line of his lips. Uncle Peter, however, looked distressed. He peered about him with aging eyes, and turned first to me, then to Hans in mute appeal, begging us, as it were, to enlighten him. The years weighed heavily on his white head, and he had long ago ceased to circulate in society. Shut up for the most part at home and in his little office at the Library (they let him keep his job as

a reward for long and distinguished service) my uncle was out of touch with current events. Of late he had become more religious than ever; he deliberately shunned what he called "mundane and corruptible things," and sought refuge in the *Lives of the Fathers*. Though he had heard that his old friend and schoolmate, Father Koch, had become something of a figure in the political underworld, he did not know what his notoriety rested on, and certainly did not expect the fantastic sight which now spread out before us.

But here was the guardian of the iron door. The man with the thick ears was coming toward us from the far end of the long cellar, and behind him came Father Koch.

I had not seen the priest for many years. He was one of those casual acquaintances whom you ignore until history spews them up into full view out of its all-devouring belly. I remembered meeting him several times in Uncle Peter's company, and always in Helga's salon, in those far-off days before she had seen the light of liberal progress, when she was still surrounded exclusively by everybody who was somebody. Father Koch was then a tall, round, heavy man on whose long, black cassock gleamed a silver crucifix; his powerful head was completely bald, and his left eye was totally blind. As he now moved slowly toward us in his underground tabernacle, I could see he had not changed much except for his clothes. He had abandoned the black cassock for a black jacket and trousers, and a jet black cloth covered his chest as far as the traditional reversed collar that stood high around his bull neck. The moment he reached us, he broke into a broad smile and shook hands with Uncle Peter warmly.

"Welcome, welcome, my dear friend!" he said in a deep, unctuous voice. "I am so glad you have come at last." He turned to me, still smiling. "And you, my dear Paul! It's so good to see you here."

Uncle Peter was completely baffled by our strange surroundings but he was determined, as old men often are, to be a good sport about it and not to ask any questions which might betray embarrassing ignorance. He had merely asked Father Koch whether he might bring two friends to one of his meetings, and both men acted as if everything was clearly understood on both sides. As Father Koch turned to the third member of our little group, my uncle introduced Hans Bayer as a history professor from Berlin. That was the story Hans and I had cooked up between us, and I stood there nervously hoping it would go down. It did. Father Koch's face lit up with pleasure.

"Ah, Berlin! How nice, Herr Bayer. Do sit down, my friends. The meeting will begin directly. Perhaps later we can go out for a little supper together and talk things over."

"That will be quite impossible," Hans said quickly. "I must catch a train at eleven."

"Some other time, perhaps," Father Koch said, his single brown eye gleaming with worldly courtesy. "But do stay here to the end, won't you?"

"We'd like to very much," I said.

"There will be a lot of talk at first," the priest said. "But afterward, at our business session, we'll get down to practical matters of real importance." He turned to Hans, who seemed to have taken his fancy. "You will stay, won't you?"

"To the bitter end," Hans said, smiling.

We all joined in a good-humored laugh. Father Koch found seats for us in one of the front rows, putting Uncle Peter at my right and Hans at my left, and himself started for the small platform at the end of the room. I looked around and saw now what I had failed to see before. The seats nearest the platform were occupied by ten or twelve men utterly different from all the others in the room, yet, in their own way, just as weird. Each of these wore a heavy black mask which concealed the upper part of his face; only the hard, confident eyes, the cruel cold lips and the heavy jaws were visible. But the most remarkable thing about them was their clothes. Two of them wore army uniforms; others wore expensive frock coats and gray-striped trousers; and several wore ordinary street clothes of excellent make. I tried to catch what these queer people were saying to each other, but the babble of voices through the gloomy hall was too great.

Now Father Koch crossed the platform and stood before the speaker's stand surveying the crowd. It was only then that I noticed, between the pitcher of water and the empty glass, a large silver crucifix lying flat on top of the stand. The priest lifted his hand and a great hush fell over the room and in that deadly silence he began speaking in a low, cajoling voice.

First Father Koch made some mysterious jokes full of astrological symbols which I did not understand, and at his cryptic reference to Aquarians and Luciferians the crowd howled with laughter. Then, suddenly, in a fierce, booming voice he launched into a diatribe that boiled furiously with violence and hate. The words were not important at the beginning; they had become common-places since the day when Europe permitted a maniac to drape himself in the brown mantle of a self-appointed Caesar, to open the sluiceways of submerged primitive passion and to flood the continent with the most abominable poison that had embittered its bowels in a thousand years. Yes, the words were echoes of the north; what was startling was to hear them uttered in our city to a mixture of

venal, ambitious, desperate, hopelessly injured men by one who still wore the cloth of the church.

"Hitler is right!" Father Koch shouted. "He knows who the troublemakers are. In this country, they run everything and ruin everything!"

He named the "troublemakers" one after the other—Jews, intellectuals, laborites, liberals, radicals, writers, scientists, everyone and anyone who did not subscribe to the brown gospel according to Father Koch; and at the end of each accusation, crackling with malice and falsehood, the crowd applauded, stamped, howled and whistled its frenzied approval. Even the speechless ones participated in the ovations, and those who could not understand a single word or the cleric's curses because they could not hear, joined their neighbors and to the general noise added their weird hooting.

Hans sat immobile through all this; he listened to everything without betraying the slightest emotion; but I could see that Uncle Peter was disturbed, especially at this moment, when his old classmate began to roar with boundless fury:

"Race against race! Blood against blood! Exterminate the vermin! Drive them out! Crush them!"

The jungle around us shrieked with delight, and the gentlemen in frock coats and black masks grinned in silent pleasure. The whole thing was so repulsive in its frenzied paranoia of vengeance that I wanted to leave at once. But Hans placed his hand on my knee and whispered:

"This is a lot of froth. Let's wait for the business session. That will be worth while, take my word for it."

Father Koch's voice kept booming across the gloomy cellar. He now began to pour out his bile upon those countries of the world which lived by law and spoke of justice.

"The democracies are decadent!" he shouted. "They are Jew-ridden. The British are run by moneybags, the Russians by red monsters, the American President is himself a Jew! They want war. Very well, they'll get it!"

Pandemonium broke loose. People leaped up from their chairs cheering wildly.

"Heil Hitler!" a voice roared.

"Heil! Heil! Heil!" the crowd echoed.

"They are getting their first taste of war now!" Father Koch said from the platform. "They are getting their first lesson in Spain!"

"Viva Franco!" a hoarse voice roared from the rear.

"God bless Franco!" a woman yelled.

Before the crowd could take up this cry, Father Koch raised his hand and silence fell over the room. Everyone sat down except the

throng that lined the walls. At my left I could see that Hans Bayer was tense, though he did not move a muscle of his face; at my right, Uncle Peter sat pale and confused. The stillness in the room was becoming unbearable. At last Father Koch broke it, saying pontifically:

"Yes, God bless Franco, the warrior of Christ!"

"Amen!" my uncle said fervently, and you could hear his voice clear across the cavern. On the platform Father Koch smiled broadly, but to my left Hans Bayer looked puzzled. He leaned over to me and whispered:

"Is the old man with them, after all?"

I did not have a chance to answer. The crowd began thundering *Amen!* and *Viva Franco!* so that the cries drowned out everything. Then the gloomy cavern became still again, and Father Koch cleared his throat and went on:

"My friends, let us face the basic issues of our time. There are fools and criminals who tell you the real enemy is Hitler. That's a lie! Who is our first and foremost enemy? Liberalism! Modern liberalism repudiated the City of God and built its secular city on a quagmire of false reason and false hope. Now this City of Satan is sinking into the abyss upon which it has relied. What is wrong with liberalism? Its naïve faith in human progress, its erroneous belief in man's mastery of science and his multiplication of comforts. Liberalism rejected the doctrine of Original Sin; thereby it became a deadly heresy!"

This was far too highbrow for the crowd; there was a restless movement in the room. But Father Koch was not talking to the crowd at this moment. He was looking directly at my uncle, whose fervent *Amen!* for Franco had pleased him; and perhaps he was also appealing to Hans Bayer and myself. At least he wanted to show us that he was no mere demagogue, capable only of whipping up the lowest passions, but that his position could find support in some kind of self-enclosed logic.

"And so deadly is the liberal heresy," Father Koch went on, "that it has spawned other heresies even more deadly. And the deadliest of these is socialism!"

The last word electrified the crowd. It exploded with hisses, catcalls and boos. People stamped their feet and made obscene noises with their lips, and the dumb hooted fantastically through the gloomy cellar filled with tobacco smoke.

"Yes," Father Koch said, "liberalism is the mother of socialism! They are inseparable! They must both be destroyed! I say, better Hitler than the heresy of liberalism! Better a thousand times the brown saviors than the archheresy of socialism!"

I looked at Uncle Peter and saw raw conflict in his face. For

years he had opposed my father and everything he stood for; he sincerely believed Franco was the warrior of Christ; but he was not sure about Hitler. He was a patriot who believed with all his heart and soul in the independence of his country.

"I say," Father Koch cried from the platform, "I say: open the gates to Hitler! Let him come! He alone can save us! Unless we permit him to unify Europe, the socialists will unify it. Do you want the Red dogs to unify Europe?"

"No!" the crowd roared back.

"No, never!" Father Koch said. "Then let Hitler come! Open the gates of our fair land to him. Open Europe to him. Let us undo the evil work of the Reformation. Let us put an end to the echoes of the French Revolution. Let us cleanse the world of liberalism and socialism! I say: let us return to the City of God, to the seamless robe, to the unity of the Middle Ages which all these foul heresies have destroyed. Let us restore the single Christian family, the Catholic world-state of peace and justice under the double guidance of Pope and Emperor. And I tell you again that Hitler, and Hitler alone, can bring us this glorious redemption!"

The crowd sat thrilled and silent. Rapt faces watched the one-eyed priest on the platform, and though most of them did not understand just what it was he had said, they were too exalted by his shapeless dream of salvation to cheer him. Only the men in the frock coats, business suits and army uniforms smiled broadly under their black masks.

And in this momentary hush that hovered over the dank hall like an invisible shroud, my uncle suddenly leaped to his feet.

He was trembling in every limb and his face was like wax. Hans Bayer seized his sleeve at once and tried to make him sit down. My uncle brushed the restraining hand aside. On the platform, Father Koch looked in our direction, startled by the interruption; and the entire crowd, from one end of the room to the other, turned to see the old man who stood there trembling with anger. Hans Bayer leaned toward me and whispered in my ear:

"The old man will spoil everything. Stop him!"

I tugged violently at Uncle Peter's coat, but he ignored me.

"Father Koch!" he began in a voice heavy with rage.

The cellar became restless. Strange eyes stared at my uncle and voices tense with curiosity began to murmur ambiguously. The most acute suspense filled the room; and in that brief, hushed moment of expectation I thought with agony of the terrible change that had come over the world. Once there had been hope, the urge toward unity, faith in the future; all that was good was on the offensive, moving gladly toward shining goals of liberation; now there was

despair, division, hatred; and all that was evil was furiously strangling the future and reviving the dankest nightmares of the past. But what nonsense! Those were faded afterimages of my dead youth. I had known better for a long time. Europe had always been at war with itself. It had never been Christian, never for one single moment. It had always been full of lust, hatred and blood, just like every other continent since the beginning of time; and now Europe was normal again.

As the murmurs of the crowd became louder, Father Koch leaned against the speaker's stand with the silver crucifix lying flat upon it, and said, smiling:

"Friends, the gentleman who has just taken the floor is my old friend Peter Hauser, the librarian."

Several faces smiled in relaxation. People began to whisper to each other.

"He is one of us," Father Koch said.

The crowd applauded warmly.

"Please give him your most respectful attention." Then, turning to my uncle, Father Koch added softly: "What is it you wanted to say, Peter?"

I looked at Hans Bayer and saw his eyes fixed calmly on the platform. Beside me, Uncle Peter stood trembling with excitement and rage. He looked around the room and said:

"I am one of you only in the True Faith. I am *not* one of you in this new, un-Catholic gospel of hate!" He turned toward Father Koch and said slowly: "How dare you preach this vile Nazi doctrine in the name of Christ? How dare you barter the freedom of our country for a crazy heretical dream?"

Father Koch's round face turned a livid green, and his jaw shook with anger. He started to say something, but thought better of it, and from his single glittering eye it was clear he wanted to halt this painful, unexpected interruption. The crowd was becoming restless again, but Uncle Peter did not notice it.

"You call yourselves Christians!" he exclaimed indignantly. "Yet you change the glory of God in the likeness of the image of corruptible man! Shame, I say. Shame and again shame! You worship tyrants, monsters, madmen and fools, and bless their crimes in the name of Christ. Have you forgotten the real teachings of our Faith? Listen, then. Listen to the words of St. Clement."

The room became very quiet now, and my uncle went on in a low, clear voice with the citation:

"The Saviour devises remedies to bring man to a healthy sense and to salvation, watching favorable opportunities, detecting lurking mischief, laying open the causes of the affections, cutting up the roots of irrational desires, admonishing man from what he ought

to abstain; furnishing every kind of antidote in order to save them who are diseased. For to save man is the greatest and most royal work of God. . . ."

Uncle Peter swung around to face the crowd.

"Do you hear that, fools? To *save* man! Not to condemn him to slavery, as you are doing; not to make him spiritually ill, to deprive him of salvation, to spread mischief, to stir his irrational desires—but to *save* him!"

"But he blessed Franco," Hans Bayer whispered to me.

"He thinks Franco is different from Hitler," I said.

"Does he now?" said Hans dryly.

"We *are* saving man!" Father Koch thundered from the platform.

"Are you?" my uncle shot back. "Do you call it saving man to preach Nazi doctrines? The church has distinctly said we must triumph over hate, over mistrust, over the distressing principle that utility is a basis of law and right, and that might makes right."

Suddenly Father Koch smiled. My uncle was taken aback by this change of attitude in the priest, but went on just the same. Shaking his finger in the direction of the platform, he said:

"Have you read the encyclical his Holiness issued this spring? The one on Nazi violations of the Concordat?"

"I have," said Father Koch, still smiling.

"Ah, then you know where the blessed Father fixed the responsibility for evil. The Pope spoke in so many words of the intrigues which from the beginning had no other aim than a war of extermination. He said that in the furrows in which we have labored to sow the seeds of true peace, others—like the enemy in Holy Scripture—sowed the tares of suspicion, discord, hatred, calumny, of secret and open fundamental hostility to Christ and His Church, fed from a thousand different sources and making use of every available means. I think tonight we have witnessed the most horrible example of this in our city!"

There were cries of anger from the crowd. From somewhere in its midst, a single, hoarse voice shouted:

"Throw the bastard out!"

It was then that Father Koch, his face very grave, lifted the silver crucifix from the speaker's stand, with a swift gesture raised it high in the air. A great, solemn stillness filled the room, and Uncle Peter looked about him abashed and bewildered.

"He's lost!" Hans Bayer whispered in my ear. "The moment even a charlatan waves the crucifix, the good ones get on their knees."

"Do you really think he will get on his knees? Now—after all that has happened?" I asked.

"Yes, you'll see. These people won't repudiate Father Koch. They won't throw him out. They won't unfrock him. He can always wave the crucifix, and the good ones will always get on their knees for that. They are all afraid. From earliest childhood they are afraid."

"What fear are you talking about? What are they afraid of?"

"The most terrible punishment in the world."

"Of course, eternal damnation," I said, "the relentless fires of hell."

"No," said Hans, "something far more terrible: *to be cut off from the faithful.*"

On the platform, Father Koch's heavy figure towered in the half-light and his right hand held the crucifix aloft. For a fraction of eternity all was still again; then he began to speak in a low, deep voice that penetrated to every corner of that dank cavern; and at the first words he placed both hands around the silver crucifix, sank to his knees and lifted his head toward heaven:

"I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth . . ."

Awed, the crowd rose from its chairs and fell upon its knees, and the people who had been standing against the wall also went down on their knees, and all heads were bowed. I knelt with the rest, and when Hans knelt beside me, I understood the necessary strategy on his part. But, to my utter astonishment, Uncle Peter stood in his place without moving. Father Koch's voice rose higher and higher as he went on:

". . . and in Jesus Christ, His Only Son, Our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified; died, and was buried. He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead."

The crowd was still kneeling with heads bowed. Father Koch inclined his head a little forward; his single, glittering eye saw my uncle standing in his place, straight and defiant, and the priest's face became violently red, but he went on:

"I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen."

"Amen," the crowd murmured devoutly.

They rose from their knees and resumed their seats and their places along the walls. One of the men in a frock coat began to mop his forehead with a silk handkerchief, as if he had just passed through a great ordeal.

But Uncle Peter remained standing in his place.

"The old man's a fool," Hans Bayer whispered at my left. "But he has guts."

Father Koch stood up and laid the crucifix down on the speaker's stand. Then he looked at my uncle intently and said slowly:

"Peter Hauser, you did not kneel."

For the first time, my uncle smiled, completely at ease.

"Koch, listen to me," he said. We were struck even at that moment by the fact that he did not say *Father Koch*. "Listen, and if you have any shame left in your corrupt heart, blush, blush to the soles of your feet. I believe every word of the Apostles' Creed. I do *not* believe you have the right to utter those sacred words in this place, to this crowd, for these purposes. You have no right to sanctify Hitler's creed with the Apostles' Creed. You have no right to bless the swastika with the cross. You have no right to make these poor fools think they are kneeling to Christ when you are really making them kneel to the Antichrist!"

The crowd began to murmur curses, but Father Koch's uplifted hand restored silence again.

"Koch," my uncle went on, and this time his voice became sardonic, "listen to me again. The Catechism teaches us that it is not enough to belong to the church in order to be saved, we must also keep the commandments of God and of the church. Sins against faith, hope and charity are sins against the first commandment. You are making political capital out of the people's doubt, despair and fear. You are trading on their presumption. Do you remember the definition of presumption, Koch? Presumption is a rash expectation of salvation. You are promising these people salvation through Hitler. What could be more rash? You are sinning against the first commandment!"

"They are listening," Hans Bayer whispered to me. "That's a good sign."

"Koch," my uncle went on, "you are also sinning against the fifth commandment, which tells us not to kill but to live in peace and union with our neighbor, to respect his rights, to seek his spiritual and bodily welfare. You are aiding a political monster who threatens his neighbors, who wishes to devour our country, who has chosen as his chief instrument nothing less than murder! Listen further, Koch. You are sinning against the eighth commandment. This forbids us to bear false witness against our neighbors. It forbids all backbiting, slanders and lies. Yet you are supporting the brown monster who has made a religion of falsehood, and in his name you have slandered the race that gave us the Mother of Christ."

The crowd sat very still. It did not know what to make of all this. Some even coughed in embarrassment, and I could see the frock

coats and the uniforms fidgeting in their seats. Father Koch, red with rage, moved toward the edge of the platform.

"Just a moment, Hauser," he said imperiously. We noticed that he no longer called my uncle *Peter*.

"No," my uncle said. "I have heard enough from you. Now you listen to me. In your lust for power, in your cynical pact with Satan, you have also sinned against the tenth commandment. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods! Hitler covets everyone's goods. He has robbed his own countrymen. He wants to rob Europe. Then he will rob the world. And you sanction all this with the cross in your covetous hand and the Apostles' Creed on your profane lips. Shame, I say! I know that when Christ comes to judge the living and the dead, your corrupt soul will be damned and double-damned to the lowest depths of hell!"

Uncle Peter sat down, his face bathed in perspiration. The room was restless with astonished confusion. But now Father Koch had a contemptuous smile on his face. He folded his hands across his paunch and spoke to my uncle with polite irony.

"Thank you, Hauser. That was a splendid sermon. Nobody has understood a word of what you said, but it was a splendid sermon anyway. Thank you very much. And now I think we can bid you good night. The spiritual part of our meeting is over. Our business session begins. I had hoped you could stay for that. But I am sure you are far too busy. So good night to you and to the gentlemen with you."

"But it's the business session I came for!" Hans whispered at my left. There was a note of profound disappointment in his voice.

Still smiling ironically, Father Koch turned to the two masked army officers in the front row.

"General, colonel, will you be good enough to escort these gentlemen outside?" The officers rose promptly and clicked their heels together. "No, never mind," Father Koch said. "On second thought, let them go without an escort. If something should happen to them, people will blame us." He turned in our direction. "Good night, gentlemen. We have some important matters to settle tonight. I'm sure you will excuse us."

Hans Bayer, his face composed again, rose and started for the aisle. My uncle and I followed him. We walked down silent aisles, past gnarled, hostile faces, and after what seemed like a thousand years we reached the iron door. Nobody moved to open it for us. Hans quietly slid the bolt back and we slipped into the dark passage, then up to the cellar above, then along the narrow, twisting stairs into the café, and finally into the street.

7

*As are men's wishes, such too are their words;
And as their words, such also are their deeds;
And as their deeds are, such too is their life.*

—*St. Clement's Exhortation to the Greeks.*

THE CLEAN, COOL air of the summer night was like a tonic, and we filled our lungs with it, glad to be alive. Uncle Peter was lost in thought and seemed to be hardly aware of our presence. Hans was smiling ironically.

"Thanks for a pleasant evening," he said. He was addressing me but looking at my uncle.

"I'm glad you liked it," I said.

"I've seen and heard everything," Hans went on. "Everything—except the one thing I wanted to see and hear. I would have given my right arm to sit through that business meeting of theirs. Instead, I got a lot of misty metaphysics."

"I'm sorry," said Uncle Peter.

"Wasn't it lucky we didn't take Kurt with us," I said. "He would have spoiled everything."

"Go to hell," said Hans.

"Let's get a drink," my uncle said.

"How about the Café Bristol?" said Hans.

"The Bristol is fine," I said, "provided you want to meet everybody."

"I think we ought to be alone," said Uncle Peter.

"How about my place?" I suggested.

"I'd like nothing better," said my uncle.

Hans Bayer waved to a passing taxi. I gave the driver my address and the car shot forward along the gloomy streets. We rode in silence all the way to the center of the city. It was good to see the bright lights again. Father Koch's cavern seemed remote and unreal like last year's nightmare. You were glad to forget it, as you were glad to forget all the nightmares of the past two decades, especially those that you ought to remember most. As we swung into the Ring, Hans said to the driver:

"Hotel Bristol, please."

The driver nodded.

"So we're going to the café after all," said my uncle.

"Let Hans have his way," I said. "He always does."

Hans turned to my uncle.

"You were splendid tonight, sir," he said. "I'm glad you said what you did. You were absolutely splendid."

Without replying, my uncle took out his pipe and lit it.

"What puzzles me," Hans went on, "is how you can say things like that and cheer Franco."

"Franco is different," said my uncle.

"The fatal mirage that kills men," Hans said. "It's always there."

We reached the hotel. The Café Bristol was built to resemble a gentlemen's club in London. It was full of mirrors and solid mahogany furniture upholstered in heavy leather. From the doorway I could see the place was crowded and that as usual many people were playing chess over their coffee. We started for an empty square table in a corner.

"Vienna has an immense equipment for idleness," Hans said as we took our seats around the table.

He was stalling for time and had fallen back on his cautious habit of drawing people out. A waiter came rushing toward us with the traditional nickel-plated tray. He set three glasses of water before us and took our order for brandy and coffee.

For a while we drank in silence, then Uncle Peter leaned back in his chair and said slowly:

"Gentlemen, I think we've had a terrible shock tonight. At least I have."

"It was pretty terrible," I said.

"I thought it was rather amusing," said Hans. "All but the end."

"Please believe me," my uncle went on. "That malicious, irresponsible charlatan Koch does not in the least represent us. You may consider him a priest who has been twice divorced, once from his church and again from his country. To think that a man ordained to preach love should preach hatred! I am ashamed, deeply, utterly ashamed."

"You should rather feel enraged," Hans said. "You should feel determined to wipe out that infamy."

"I'm too old for that," said Uncle Peter. "Perhaps others will do it."

"I wonder," Hans said in a voice so low that I barely heard him, "I wonder if the church itself could not wipe out this infamy—if it really wanted to."

Uncle Peter cupped his right ear with his hand, leaned forward and asked:

"I did not catch that. What did you say, sir?"

It was then Hans Bayer made that curious, cryptic statement of his:

"I was saying, sir, that after all Christ has triumphed. At last we have learned to forgive our enemy. We not only forgive him; we do more than that. We fall on our knees before him, place a machine gun in his hands, stretch out our necks and cry: Go ahead, brother! Kill us! Yes, it has become easy to forgive our enemies. What is really hard is to forgive our friends."

Uncle Peter looked at each of us in turn and tried to smile. He was playing the grand old sport again. But when he saw Hans Bayer laughing softly to himself, he gave it up and said:

"Gentlemen, a strange thought came to me during Father Koch's speech. Our northern neighbors have always remained outside the European soul. They have never stopped being pagans or worshiping the cult of blood. What has ruined Europe has been the untamed Gothic warrior."

"What about Eckhardt?" I said. "What about Goethe, Schiller and Kant? Bach, Beethoven and Hegel?"

"Those pious devotees of the Greeks, Romans and Jews!" my uncle exclaimed. "They never made Faustian policy. I mean the boots, the spurs and the blood."

"Come, come, gentlemen," Hans Bayer said, "don't quarrel over metaphysical nonsense." He turned to my uncle with a friendly smile and added: "It's very unusual of you, and very wrong, to reverse the race theory like that. The evil you speak of is not confined to any one country. It's a deadly weed that grows everywhere, and if all of us don't get busy at once to wipe it out, it will strangle all that's fine in our Western heritage."

"That was no metaphysical nonsense," I said. "Uncle Peter was probably thinking of Heinrich Heine's famous prophecy."

"I don't know it," said my uncle.

"It runs like this," I said: "Christianity, and this is its greatest merit, has occasionally calmed the brutal German lust for battle, but it cannot destroy that savage joy."

"Did Heine say that?" my uncle asked. He leaned forward with awakened interest.

"He said even more: And when once that restraining talisman the cross is broken, then the old combatants will rage with fury celebrated by the Norse poets. The wooden talisman is fast decaying; the day will come when it will break pathetically to pieces. Then the old stone gods will rise from unremembered ruins and rub the dust of a thousand years from their eyes, and Thor will leap to life at last and bring down the gigantic hammer on the Gothic cathedrals.

. . . Do not smile. It is no mere fantasy . . . a drama will be performed which will make the French Revolution seem like a pretty idyll. Never doubt it . . . the hour will come."

"When did Heine say that?" Hans Bayer asked.

"1834."

"Rather prophetic in its own way," said Hans.

"When poets are really good they are always prophetic," I said, refilling our glasses with brandy.

"What's prophetic about it?" my uncle said. "The wooden talisman is *not* decaying. It has *not* pathetically fallen to pieces. The stone gods have *not* risen from their ruins. The gigantic hammer has *not* come down on the Gothic cathedrals. And I don't see any drama which makes the French Revolution seem like a pretty idyll."

"It's easy to see you are not a poet," I said.

"Or a prophet," Hans added, smiling. "But stick around another ten years, sir, and see what happens."

"You mean a new world war?" said my uncle. "We have survived every war for nineteen hundred years, and we'll survive the next one. Perhaps we shall survive it stronger than ever."

"I wouldn't boast about those nineteen hundred years if I were you," I said. "That's a very long time, and in all that time you haven't improved man very much."

"Don't listen to Paul," said Hans Bayer. "He's an idealist like our friend Kurt. He doesn't understand that for the first thousand years the church was the most progressive institution in the West. After that it started to go downhill. Man is now destined to be saved by science and by—by—by liberalism."

Hans meant to say something else, but caught himself in time. He had no intention of revealing himself to my uncle.

"I hope that illusion comforts you, young man," Uncle Peter said. "I don't see what science and liberalism have done for man spiritually. You have robbed him of God. What have you given him instead? You have even abandoned philosophy and have fallen into the error that science can solve everything. You have replaced the qualitative with the quantitative. You worship things of no importance, things which can be easily demonstrated to the dullest minds; but you ignore the truly important things which even the greatest minds can grasp only by appreciation. You have permitted yourselves to float on the dead sea of materialism and fatalism, and look what it has done to you."

"What has it done to us?" Hans asked, smiling.

"You imagine all the process of the world is inevitable. You think evil is due to impersonal causes. What do you think produced Father Koch, for instance?"

"Historical circumstances," said Hans.

"There you are!" my uncle cried. "How simply, how vaguely you explain everything. Do you realize what you have done? You have eliminated moral indignation. You have lost the most important key to all action—the distinction between right and wrong."

"I see," said Hans calmly. "And the sole remedy is for all of us to return to the Apostles' Creed."

I stood up and said ironically:

"Gentlemen, I'm afraid I'll have to leave you."

"Aren't you feeling well?" said Uncle Peter.

"I feel fine. But I refuse to stay with you two if you are going to argue God, freedom and immortality. No, no, uncle! Don't look at me like that. And don't ask me if I believe in God. We've had a century of it, and that's enough."

"Sit down," said Hans with authority. "We're not talking religion. We're talking politics."

I sat down and raised my glass of brandy.

"Ah, politics," I said. "Here's to politics."

My uncle and Hans Bayer looked at me sternly.

"Won't anybody join me in a toast to politics?" I said. "No? Then I'll drink it alone. We've had politics for six thousand years and see how marvelously it has improved the nature of man. From the amoeba to Father Koch! Anyway, here's to politics."

I lifted my glass and set it down on the table without drinking.

"You're an anarchist," said Hans Bayer sharply. "We are talking here in the approaching shadow of the greatest war in history, and you are not ashamed to be frivolous."

"I'm not an anarchist," I said. "I'm not frivolous. I see the coming war as clearly as you. Perhaps more clearly; for I don't believe, as you do at this moment, that it will usher in the millennium, and that you will sit at the right hand of God, so to speak."

"Just the same," my uncle said, "you are an infidel, a man without faith."

"A man without *your* faith," I said to my uncle kindly, "but not a man without faith. I believe in the visible world which changes with time. And I also believe in the invisible world whose constituents do not change with time."

"What invisible world?" said Hans Bayer suspiciously.

"The invisible world whose realities correspond to the mathematical statement that $5+6=11$."

"What's mystical about that?" said Hans.

"I didn't say mystical. I said invisible. Do you like to listen to the radio?"

"Yes. What's the catch?"

"There's no catch. The radio is part of the visible world. You see it, touch it, hear it."

"And don't forget," said Hans quickly, "you *pay* for it!"

We all laughed at that.

"The radio is visible," I said, "but it would not exist except for James Clerk Maxwell's equations indicating the properties of electromagnetic waves. Those properties are invisible. The waves are invisible. But they are real and I believe in them."

"There you are!" my uncle exclaimed. "You believe in quantity, in matter!"

"I do believe in quantity and matter," I said. "But mathematical equations are not matter. They are thought. Thought is invisible. Thought is real. I believe in thought."

"So do I," said my uncle. "But not because it gives us radios. I believe in thought because it confirms the Apostles' Creed, because it establishes the casuistry of Moral Theology, because it enables us to search continually for further details in the general body of truth taught by the church, one, eternal, indivisible, infallible. We have thought and we have faith. You have no faith."

My uncle sipped his brandy with satisfaction. Hans Bayer lit a cigarette, leaned back in his chair and smiled; his gray eyes twinkled with some ironic, undecipherable thought. I felt very gay. I wanted to pour out my mind, and the words came flowing almost against my will, as if they felt among friends who would really understand and sympathize.

"Faith," I said, "is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. I have faith. I believe in man, in experience, everlasting change, the life of reason, and continual progress. I believe with the wise man who said it is better to tell the truth than to lie, better to be free than to be a slave, and better to know than to be ignorant. The idea that man can produce the kind of experience in which science and the arts can be brought to bear upon industry, politics, religion, domestic life and human relations in general is a novel idea, but I believe in that idea with all my power. I believe I shall live to see an enlightened politics give the world greater security and unity, and I believe science will give man greater freedom from his primeval heritage of hatred and fear."

"Is that what you really believe?" my uncle asked.

"Yes," I said. "*Credo quia non absurdum est.*"

"Ah, no. That is only what your reason has reconciled you to believe. In his heart every man believes in some absolute."

"But, my dear uncle, the only thing I'm absolutely sure of is that there are no absolutes!"

"Your credo is long enough," Hans Bayer interrupted. "You do indeed have faith—a nice, big, vague, meaningless faith. What about the immediate struggle? What about the burning issues of the day? Where do you stand there?"

Suddenly I became very depressed.

"Ah, politics," I said.

"Yes, yes!" Hans Bayer said. "Politics is destiny."

"All right," I said. "I'm with you on Spain. I'm with you against fascism. I'm with you on the democratic idea. I'll be with you in the coming war. I won't be of the slightest importance. You'll get along very nicely without me. You won't even know I exist. But I'll be with you. What more do you want? Do you expect me to believe that in the next two hundred years there won't be a tremendous gap between the highest and the lowest?"

"That's all pretty passive," Hans Bayer said, and the corners of his mouth went down. "But for the time being it will do." He turned to my uncle. "What about you, sir? You won't join us on Spain because you suffer from illusions about Franco. But you made a splendid attack on Father Koch. Won't you join us in the fight against fascism here? We have any number of committees you can work with."

My uncle puffed on his pipe slowly and studied Hans Bayer's calm, strong face for a moment.

"I don't like fascism," my uncle said. "And I don't like socialism. I am an old man, but as far as I can I'll help the fight against both."

"Socialism isn't the issue today," Hans Bayer said. "Fascism is."

"If the church decides it's necessary to fight fascism," Uncle Peter said, "I'll naturally support that fight."

"Naturally," said Hans dryly. "Do you think the church will ever decide it's necessary to fight fascism?"

"I have no way of knowing in advance what the church will decide," said Uncle Peter. "I can only try to obey and understand the decisions it does make."

Hans sipped his coffee and brandy thoughtfully.

"You see," I said to him, "moral indignation is one thing, and authority is something else again."

Hans rose and picked up the check.

"Well," he said. "It's been a profitable evening for me. I wanted to hear some of Father's Koch's plots with my own ears. Instead I've heard a lot of Viennese babble about nothing at all. I hoped your uncle might join us in a good cause, but he wants to wait for a higher decision which may never come. And that, alas, is how great issues come finally to be settled on the battlefield."

Hans called the waiter and paid the check. Then he winked gaily and said to me:

"In the long run, my friend, reason also is on the side of the heaviest battalions."

We stood outside the Bristol, and the summer wind from the

Alps made the night fresh and cool. It was nearly two o'clock. A large moon lit the heavens brightly. Hans signaled a porter and sent him for a taxi. Then he turned to my uncle and said:

"I'm sorry if I offended you in any way, sir. I was only trying to provoke you into action. I failed. Perhaps I can provoke you into thought. Father Koch's meeting shocked you. Have you any real idea of the dangers it represents? The Nazis dominate my country. They have enslaved my people. I can tell you something about them. Would you like to know—from your own specific viewpoint—what the New Order will be like if they win everywhere?"

"I imagine it will be unpleasant," Uncle Peter said.

"Rather. The Nazis hate Christianity. They hate its universal outlook which conflicts with their creed of race, with their worship of the state, one, indivisible, infallible. They hate its doctrine of faith, hope and charity. They loathe its emphasis on mercy, love and the equality of all men in the sight of God. All this conflicts with their gospel of ruthless domination, uncompromising, pitiless, brutal. They say their race made a terrible mistake when it adopted Christianity during the decadence of Rome. They want to undo that historic mistake; they want to reverse two thousand years of Christian teaching. They denounce Christ as a sickly, neurotic figure; they ridicule Him as a Jew. Their religion is the state, the race. Their god is Adolf Hitler. His portrait fills the homes of the country. Women are encouraged to light candles and place flowers before it every day. Do you think you can appeal to the conscience of these monsters with your moral indignation? They have no conscience and no scruples of any kind. You are wasting your breath when you accuse them of crime. The word *crime* no longer exists in their lexicon. The Fuehrer can do no wrong."

"Aren't you laying it on a little thick?" Uncle Peter said.

"On the contrary," said Hans, "I'm giving you a very sketchy picture. The full truth would be incredible. That is the strength of the Nazis. Decent people refuse to believe that any of their contemporaries can really revert to barbarism—literally and completely. We have been warning the world for years, but the world won't listen. These self-appointed conquerors of mankind understand only force. Do you realize what that means to your church? Your moral force is nothing to these people, and you have no physical force to protect you."

"Our moral force has enabled us to survive physical force many times before this," my uncle said.

"You may survive," said Hans, "but how? Once Hitler is allowed to conquer Europe, he will have the Pope, the Vatican and the cardinals in the palm of his hand. He will be able to confiscate

your schools, colleges, asylums, hospitals and monasteries. You will survive as the rest of Europe will survive. You will survive as slaves. Think of that before it is too late."

The Bristol porter came up riding on the running board of an aged taxi. He opened the door of the car and stood at respectful attention.

"Aren't you exaggerating?" my uncle said to Hans.

"Yes," said Hans, "we always seem to be exaggerating, and we always turn out to be right. Can I drop you off at your place, sir?"

My uncle said yes, thanks; but I decided to walk home.

The boulevards were deserted and the city was still. As I came up the stairway of our house in the dim light, I looked at my watch and saw it was two-thirty. Through the door of our apartment I could hear the soft tapping of Peggy's typewriter. She often waited up for me like that, working while she waited. The moment I opened the door, she came out to greet me, and in her kiss there was the fragrance of home. She wore a dark-blue kimono and a pink nightgown, and her lovely face was a little tired. We went into the living room and sat down on the couch close to each other.

"It's late," she said. "You must have had an interesting time."

I told her about it briefly.

"So Hans was surprised at the way the Koch meeting turned out," she said, laughing. "Well, I have a surprise for you, too. Kurt was here this evening. And would you believe it? He knew all about your little adventure."

"How did he find out?"

"The usual way. Hans told some comrade about it in the strictest confidence, and this comrade told it to Kurt in the strictest confidence."

"And Kurt told it to you in the strictest confidence."

"Since you are in the secret anyway," Peggy said, "he assumed I would talk to you about it."

"How did he take his exclusion?"

"What exclusion? Oh, that! He never gave it a thought."

I was rather embarrassed.

"Did you tell him how I felt about it?" I said.

"Yes. I hope you don't mind."

"What did he say to that?"

"He laughed. You're too sensitive about these things, he said, because you are out of touch with practical life. As far as he's concerned, Hans knows exactly what to do in any circumstance, and it's invariably right."

"I'm sorry I missed Kurt," I said.

"He promised to drop in again this week. You know he and Hans are leaving for Spain any day now."

Peggy took my hand in hers and laughed softly.

"Kurt wants me to go to Spain, too," she said quickly, without any preliminaries.

"What is this?" I said, smiling. "Romance?"

"No, you old-fashioned silly. War. He thinks I could do some pieces for my papers in England and America. And he thinks it will be very useful if I come in person with the relief I've been collecting for the Spanish children."

"How do you feel about it?"

"I don't know, yet."

"It's the propaganda that appeals to him. The English woman writer who came to Vienna to bring relief to the children of Floridsdorf now goes to Madrid to bring relief to the children of Spain."

"Now that you put it that way," Peggy said, "it might help the cause, after all."

"It's not a bad idea, but I don't like it. I can't bear to think of you risking your life even for a great cause."

"There you are," Peggy said. "You *are* out of touch with practical life. There's no real danger for people like me. Scores of journalists have gone to Spain and have come out hale and hearty."

"What would I do without you?"

"I'd be gone only about six or seven weeks."

"I couldn't live without you for a day."

She put her arms about me and kissed me tenderly.

"You're a darling, Paul. But really there's no danger for me. And even if there were? Think of the greater danger that threatens us all. Do you think your uncle is the only one who suffers from fatal illusions about the Warrior of Christ? Here, let me show you something."

I followed her to the table at which she had been working. Her typewriter was surrounded by newspapers, magazines, books and clippings.

"I've been jotting down notes on Spain for my news-diary," Peggy said. "Have you any idea what frightful lies are being circulated about Spain?"

"What do you expect?" I said. "Where there is blood there is falsehood."

"Look at the London papers," she said. "Franco is saving the country from Red anarchy, no less! And here is the declaration of the Spanish bishops: the common good, religion, justice and peace are all gravely compromised by the Loyalists. How do you like that? Franco is fighting for social peace, the national tradition, the church

—for the spiritual order of Christianity. The Loyalists are fighting for economic materialism dominated by Russia. That's how the bishops put it. Can you blame a pious, ill-informed old man like your uncle for thinking Franco is the Warrior of Christ? He believes all these lies!"

Peggy's face was flushed, and her wide gray eyes sparkled with indignation. She was one of those who even at that time was capable of great moral anger at the atrocities of despotism.

"Lies! Lies!" she said. "And everybody who knows anything knows they are lies. They know the Axis encouraged Franco to rebel against the legal government of the people's republic. And they know the Axis sent its first airplanes to Franco three days before the rebellion started! Look who's fighting for this Warrior of Christ—Mussolini's blackshirts, Hitler's butchers, mercenary Moors!"

She rapidly laid out magazine photographs showing Axis tanks and airplanes in Spain, and two clippings in which Moorish troops were cheering a victory. Then she picked up a copy of the *London Times* and said with mounting anger:

"Don't let your uncle deceive himself. The bishops do not represent the Catholic people of Spain. They speak only for the fascists. Look at this speech by Father Juan Garcia Morales. It tells quite a different story: 'My brothers, you must know that many Spanish priests are on the side of the people's cause.' And here is the appeal of Father Morales to the Pope: 'Speak justice and blame harshly, as did the Savior of the World, these hypocrites, pretenders and Pharisees who live in the shadow of religion and bring about the ruin of Spain.' And Father Morales is not the only one! There are lots of great Catholics who support the people's republic against the Axis—Guerra, Morena, Aguirre, José Bergamin, Ossoria y Galdardo, Father Lobo."

I knew many of these things, but did not interrupt her. What fascinated me most at this moment was the uncompromising passion with which she felt the great struggle of that year, and the clear insight with which she grasped its meaning for the world.

"It's not only the lying and the blood," I said. "Two tremendous principles are locked in combat. The other day a Spanish fascist told a correspondent of the Catholic *La Croix*: 'We have no wounded prisoners. Not one. Medical supplies are scarce and dear. Do you suppose we would waste them on prisoners? Since it's our business to kill them, it is not likely we are going to help them!' But see what happened in Madrid when the Loyalists captured nearly two hundred rebels on the Hill of the Angels. The rebel prisoners were taken to Loyalist headquarters. They were poorly dressed, badly fed and terrified they would be killed. *La Pasionaria* came to talk to them:

'Your lives are as sacred as our own. Your welfare is just as dear to us.' Who are the Christians? Modern democracy, modern socialism even, inherits the essence of original Christian morality—the sanctity of the individual, the equality of all men in the sight of God. It's changed across the centuries; we get it now in secular terms, but it's all there in La Pasionaria's speech. But the rebels let their wounded prisoners die; they slaughter the innocents, women and children. Why not? Fascism is trying to undo two thousand years of Western morality. Hitler has said in so many words 'conscience is a Jewish invention; it's a blemish like circumcision.' He has also said that the word *crime* comes from a world of the past. Do you know what the Axis wants? It's there in print for anybody to read. It considers everything useless except the resurrection of the earliest ideas and customs of the dawn of humanity. But the wiseacres in the Foreign Offices of the world think this is still the old diplomatic maneuvering, the same old moth-eaten wirepulling for the balance of power. They think the Axis will save them from socialism. Do you think your stories in a few English and American papers will make them see anything different?"

Peggy looked at me quietly for a moment without smiling. I could see she thought I had gone off on a tangent. She switched back at once to the original course of her argument.

"Look what's happening in my country," she said. "Chamberlain's government has excluded Father Lobo from England, but permits Franco agents to enter. We welcome the liars and exclude the truth-tellers. But Father Lobo's words have been printed. Give this to your uncle, and let him do a little thinking."

She handed me a clipping and I read:

"The rebels have confounded things that are utterly opposed—Christ and Mohammed, violence and religion, fascism and Spain. The church will gain nothing if it creeps back to power under Franco's bayonets."

"I'll give this to Uncle Peter," I said, "but do you really think it will do any good? Facts are helpless against prejudice. Reason is even more helpless. And most helpless of all is justice."

"You give up too easily," Peggy said. "I want to go to Spain and see things for myself. I want to tell my English and American readers the truth, witnessed and attested. You understand, don't you, dear?"

I picked up an English picture magazine and looked through it. The center spread showed various scenes from the Spanish civil war. There was a picture of a woman examining the deep, long scar inflicted forever by Axis bombs on the head of her eleven-year-old son. There was a naked child, less than a year old, lying on its

back plump and fresh as the Holy Infant lies in various classic paintings; and there were heavy bandages on its round head, its right leg and its left foot, and its large dark eyes looked infinitely old.

"We don't have to decide now," I said. "It's too late. How about going to bed?"

Later, in the darkness, I woke from sleep and saw Peggy sitting up, staring into space.

"Are you all right, Peg?"

"Do forgive me, dear. I didn't mean to wake you. I can't sleep."

"What's on your mind?"

"I keep thinking of all sorts of terrible things. Do you know what the rebels did at Badajoz? They herded two thousand workers into the bull ring. They placed machine guns around the arena. They kill bulls only according to the strictest rules. But there are no longer any rules for killing men. The rebels opened fire on those unarmed people herded in the ring. They shot them down without mercy. The bodies lay in heaps for days. The wounded were left to die in a long, slow agony. The Warrior of Christ did that. And do you know the story from Algeciras? They arrested the wife of a Republican who had escaped to Gibraltar. She was heavy with child. The rebels forced her to drink a large mixture of castor oil and petrol, then they graciously permitted her to go off to her husband. The next day she died a frightful, obscene death, taking her unborn child with her. The bishops are right, maybe; Franco is saving their Christian spiritual order. When the Loyalists recaptured the town of Morón, they found many women with their breasts cut off, and on the walls of the town the rebels had written: 'We shall die, but your wives shall give birth to fascists.' Shall I go on, dear?"

"No, for heaven's sake!" I said. "It's the spirit of the age, after all. I read a statement by Hitler the other day: 'Anyone who gets out of step will be shot!' These people say monstrous things. They do monstrous things. But the world accepts them calmly—all except a handful of fanatical idealists whom the world betrays."

My fear was babbling nonsense in the dark.

"You can't call Spain a handful of fanatical idealists," Peggy said. "A whole people is fighting at bay for its freedom and its life. And millions the world over are with them, and one-sixth of the earth aids them. It isn't enough to have good will. We must learn to fight better than the enemy. We must destroy him before it's too late!"

"I've thought it over," I said. "I think you ought to go to Spain. If I hadn't contracted to give summer courses at the University I'd go with you."

Peggy laughed softly with joy. She lay back on the pillow in

the dark and turned to me and never before had I seen her face so beautiful with love of the world and high resolve.

"We can't go this summer," she said. "I'll have to make arrangements with Hague, and he won't get back from New York until September. But I'll go then; and when I return, your sabbatical year will begin. It's next May, isn't it? We'll go together to England! I'll lecture and write on the Spanish civil war, I'll tell them the truth which alone can set us free, and I'll show you London."

"I've always dreamed of seeing London with you," I said, and took her in my arms, close, close to my heart, and kissed her for a long time, and she was so exhausted by the thoughts which kept beating through her entire being that she fell asleep almost at once.

8

*There is no hiding in these island seas.
The air is full of forebodings of disaster.
The gulls come up dead on the tide.*

—Lloyd Frankenberg

IT TOOK HANS AND KURT three weeks to get off to Spain. Up to the night when they started on the journey which finally landed them on the battlefield with the Thaelmann Battalion they worked feverishly in our city. Their farewell consisted of a series of meetings at which they pleaded the Loyalist cause, raised money for Spain and warned against the spread of fascism everywhere. These meetings always ended with a resolution cabled to London, Washington and Paris urging: *Lift the embargo!* At one of them, Hans and Kurt launched a new organization which they called League for the Rights of Man. It included chiefly liberals like myself and its activities were confined to aiding the Spanish cause and conducting propaganda against the Nazis.

At this time, the government of our republic was ruling by decree and public meetings that had the slightest radical tinge to them were not easy to hold. But with extraordinary speed and tact, Hans Bayer arranged for a series of gatherings in private homes. They were held in rapid succession and in the most unexpected places. You came to a cocktail party, a dance, a buffet supper, a soirée or a costume ball at some fashionable residence in the Ring, and before long someone would be making a speech and the guests would donate money for the Loyalist cause. As a rule, Kurt made the speeches. Hans Bayer felt that in these places nothing would be more effective than the poet's charm, sincerity and literary reputation. At other places, Hans took the floor himself. He spoke simply, without rhetoric or gestures, and always seemed to be saying the same thing; yet his words invariably had a profound effect on the audience. They were impressed by his unusual force of character, his ability to cut through surface illusions, to get down to life-and-death essentials, to drive indelibly into people's minds the party teaching that the liberation of Spain from the yoke of the fascists

was not the private affair of the Spaniards, but the common cause of the whole of advanced and progressive mankind.

These gatherings were not public, but they were not secret either. Everyone knew when and where they were held; but since we met in private homes, the authorities did not interfere. That was fortunate. People were not afraid to come; and if you attended many of these affairs, as Peggy and I did, you were sure to run into all sorts of men and women, from genuine devotees of the democratic idea to those who liked to be in the swim of things and to bask in the reflected glory of other people's good deeds. Consequently, the parties mirrored various changes which had come over Viennese society. Those who might have been expected to come to affairs of this kind a decade earlier shunned them like the plague. Ludwig Hauck, whom reactionary circles continued to regard as a reliable expert on the Left which he hated, denounced the pro-Loyalist gatherings at every opportunity in the press and over the radio as dangerous Red conspiracies. Teddy Hoffman, still a stanch Social Democrat, belonged to one of the broader Spanish committees, but would not attend any meeting at which he knew Hans Bayer or Kurt Hertzfeld would speak.

"He supports Spain with his tongue and strangles it with his hands," Kurt said to me once. "I heard him haranguing some people at a dinner the other night. The poor fool isn't sure whether Spain's enemy is the Axis or Russia!"

At these Spanish affairs, Helga was of course in her full glory. Her prestige in the fashionable houses where they were held was enormous, and this was useful to the cause. In turn, her usefulness to the cause increased her prestige. It also made her a dramatic figure in the working-class districts where she occasionally appeared in the full glamour of noblesse oblige. Naturally, she looked upon the Spanish conflict, indeed upon the whole world-wide struggle against fascism, as something purely personal. A noble cause cannot destroy vanity or the hunger for power; Spain fed these in Helga as Ritter's dizzy position in the industrial world had once fed them. With his usual naïve candor, Kurt once said to me:

"In a way, the people who die in Spain make Helga happy. They give her something to do and enable her to feel important."

If this sounded cruel, it was only because the facts were cruel. Kurt was in the habit of saying things like that without malice; he imagined one could speak any kind of truth, simply because it was the truth, and even fancied that his affection would palliate the sting instead of making it even sharper.

Hans Bayer was too clever not to realize what Helga was really like, but he never outwardly betrayed his sense of her shortcomings. As far as we could tell, he was genuinely fond of Helga and deeply

impressed by the immense social power she wielded. They seemed to be enjoying life together, but that was considered a wholly private matter. As a public figure, it was Hans Bayer's business to use everyone he could for the cause. On that score, the Countess zu Fassenheim was a great asset. She was a puzzle, too. The night we accompanied Hans and Kurt to the railway station and saw them off on their journey to Madrid, she wept bitter tears; and even Peggy, who was a far better judge of people than I, could not tell whether the countess was really moved or whether she was merely dramatizing herself out of pride and out of a desperate desire to convince herself that at last she was actually in love with a man of some importance and a great deal of character.

Things quieted down after the departure of our friends. The summer was a sultry one, and except for a brief ten days' vacation on the Semmering, Peggy and I worked steadily in town. She went on with her Spanish committees and wrote a great deal for her papers. I became fairly active in the League for the Rights of Man, gave special summer courses at the university and worked on my book *Of Human Freedom*. The notes kept piling up, but I could not get started with the writing. Somehow the book had not yet acquired real shape. Perhaps it was because it had no central idea. At first, Peggy was rather worried about this, but after a while she encouraged me to keep on in that blind way until I saw some light. The important thing, she said, was to go on working and to clarify the material when it was ready. She herself was preoccupied with her trip to Spain, but that was still in the future. Her guess had been right. Russell Hague wrote from New York that he liked the idea of her covering Spain for about two months, but she had better wait until he returned to Europe in the fall; then he could look over the general situation and make the necessary decisions on the spot.

By the time autumn arrived, Peggy was very restless. She went about her work listlessly and carried on a voluminous correspondence with friends in Spain. From Hans Bayer we heard only indirectly. He did not like to write letters apparently, but used to send brief notes to Helga in a small, neat script. They were quite impersonal, and we did not hesitate to read them when she brought them to us. They were full of editorial paragraphs and political advice. Here is one I remember:

"Details and trifles must be ignored. We must not nurse any kind of personal rancor. We must rise above all petty personal differences. Don't be like those people who, because of personal differences, commit the unpardonable crime of opposing unity. Remember, by himself the individual is nothing; the people are everything. Think always of the common interests of the people."

Helga felt that because these sentiments were expressed in let-

ters to her they were statements of the most intimate emotions. Perhaps she was right; perhaps for Hans Bayer that was the most impressive way of saying: "I love you, therefore I address you as I address the people, whom I love more dearly than anything on earth."

Kurt, on the other hand, wrote us at great length whenever he had a chance, and from him we learned about the various battles in which he and Hans took part in Spain, and the general course of the struggle in Madrid, Valencia, Aragon, Barcelona and the Asturias. Peggy used to read excerpts from these letters at various committees on which she worked; she used them to raise money for the relief of Spanish children; but their chief effect upon her was to stir her desire for Spain to an almost unbearable pitch.

At last we heard from Russell Hague. He wrote us from Paris a fortnight after he arrived there; and before he got down to the matter which most concerned us, he poured out his surprise at the sensation that had startled the French capital.

There had been a series of outrages. When the authorities investigated these, they discovered the existence of a Secret Committee of Revolutionary Action. Wise to the misuse of words, Paris at once called the members of this committee the Cagoullards—the Hooded Ones. It was established that these men were receiving money from Rome and Berlin. They were paid to seize power and set up a Fascist Directory in France. This outrageous plot was hushed up. Too many leaders of the army and high finance were involved in the dark conspiracy to sell their country to the Axis. But the names of the proposed Fascist Directory were known, and that was what puzzled Hague.

I tell you this in some detail, doctor, to remind myself once more how blind the best of us were in those days. Would you like to know the names of those whom the Axis selected at that time to govern France? There was Jacques Doriot, a renegade communist turned fascist, one of the most repulsive examples in modern times of how a man starting out at one political pole can wind up at its precise opposite. There was Jean Chiappe, the Corsican whom Paris called Johnny Ass, friend of gamblers, thieves and killers and former police chief of the capital. Then there was Pierre Laval, renegade socialist; slippery, treacherous couloir politician whom nobody trusted and nobody destroyed. A malodorous group so far, but the Axis knew the corrupt elite of France only too well and did not hesitate to invest in the very top. Fronting for the Hooded Ones in the Fascist Directory were two men whose presence confused everybody, including our friend Russell Hague.

"I can't account for General Maxime Weygand in this Directory," he wrote us. "A devoutly religious man. During the war he and Marshal Foch used to pray together at Mass before starting

the day's butchery. A fanatical Catholic of whom the old Tiger once said he was up to his neck in priests. A reactionary of the first water, certainly, but a patriot. How do you account for his being mixed up with a group acting on the orders of Rome—and Berlin! But there's an even greater mystery in the name that climaxes the Fascist Directory. I'll give you a thousand guesses and you'll never get to first base. A Left general, no less; a good republican; a man who at eighty is a shining symbol of the most righteous kind of patriotism. Would you believe it? Marshal Henri Pétain! It beats me. There's something fishy in this. Maybe the Cagouards used the names of Weygand and Pétain and Laval without their knowledge." And Hague concluded: "I just can't imagine that men of their standing in France would betray their country to its worst enemies."

Are you smiling, doctor? That was long, long ago, in prehistoric times. In fact, five whole years ago! And wasn't it only yesterday that men in the democracies who ought to have known better were taken in by Laval, Weygand and Pétain *after three years of war*? History moves in a mysterious way its wonders to perform, the future determines the past, and none so blind as those who will not see. There is a dramatic element in that list of names today. To think that five years ago Hitler had already selected his French Gauleiter! But in those days it wasn't dramatic. Only the visionaries of the world saw the inexorable pattern. For everybody else it was merely sensational. People read the headlines as usual and as usual forgot. And that's interesting, too. Memory is not only the mother of the muses; it is also the mother of survival.

However, I am digressing—vorbeireden, you call it—talking past the real point. The real point was that Hague concluded his letter by asking Peggy whether she wouldn't like to "run down to Madrid" and do some stories for him. He said this as if it were a new idea, wholly original with him. He had forgotten that Peggy had made precisely this request five or six times. Executives are sometimes like that. Peggy was so delighted to go to Spain at last that she danced around the room several times, then telephoned a cable to Hague in Paris: LEAVING MADRIDWARD IMMEDIATELY MARGARET BISHOP SCHUMAN. Immediately meant a week. But finally all the baggage was packed, all the documents were in proper order and all the relief money for the children of Spain was gathered and sealed. We decided there was no time for a farewell party, and Peggy said her good-byes over the phone and in various hasty visits. We did have Siegfried Gross and his parents to dinner one night; Helga dropped in for twenty minutes; and whenever she had a free moment, Peggy would run across the courtyard to see the Webers and to play with Ingrid, her little goddaughter, now one year old and very pretty.

When the time for her departure arrived, my wife arranged to take the night train so that we could have dinner together on her last day in Vienna. I had come to terms with my distaste for parting from her. She was a journalist with an important job to do; there could be no question on that score; the liberal gospel triumphed over the older, more primitive impulses of the male animal with a rather abnormal fear of the very loneliness which he had courted for years.

"Now is the time to keep that date you broke," I said.

"What date?" Peggy asked. Then she laughed, remembering the dinner I had arranged for her three years ago in a little Hungarian restaurant the day she was going to leave for London and fell sick instead. "Wasn't it lucky for me I did break that date!"

"I'm the lucky one," I said. "But it wouldn't have made any difference the other way. That was fate. If you hadn't stayed here, I'd have followed you to London."

I had arranged everything in advance at the Hungarian restaurant just as I had done the first time. There were fresh flowers on the table; the wine was already chilling in an ice pail on the floor under the red-checkered tablecloth; and the moment we sat down the gypsy orchestra bowed and smiled and began to play *If I were rich, you would not have to walk*. Peggy was moved by all this. Her wide gray eyes sparkled with joy and a moment later filled with tears.

"Maybe I ought to tell you what I was thinking at this table waiting for you three years ago," I said. "I waited and thought how nice it would be to see London with you."

"That's just what we'll do," she said. "As soon as I get back we'll arrange to go to England."

I poured some Szuerke Baràt for both of us, and as I lifted my glass she followed suit.

"Here's to the people of England," I said.

"And here's to the people of Spain!"

We clinked our glasses and drank them clean.

"And now," I said gravely, "maybe I'd better tell you a secret I've been keeping from you."

"A secret?" she said alarmed. "What secret?"

"You must promise not to tell anybody."

"You know you can trust me, Paul."

"All right. The secret is, I love you. Oh, I know, I know, I've said it before a thousand times. But that was different. That was the beginning of love. I didn't really know you. Now I know you and love you with all my heart and soul."

She laughed gently and pressed my hand and we drank another glass of wine to each other. That was all I said then, for I could not explain to her that after three years, the high love of that first summer on the Semmering appeared like the lyrical prelude to a profound symphony, that only now had my innermost self transcended all the remotest indefinable barriers and stood face to face with the true glory of her being. I did not know how to tell her that deeply as I loved everything visible about her, the thoughts she uttered, the words she said, the little tender things she **did for** me, the great hopes she had for the world, it had all become part of something new and overwhelming, something that would outlast her beauty and our youth, something old age could not tarnish or death destroy. And this thing was so quiet, so sublime, so utterly assured, that if you called it love, you would have to say it had just begun, and everything before it was only a preparation; but if you called the prelude love, then you would have to find another word for this new thing. But there was no word for this. No word was better. No word was necessary. For now, as I looked at Peggy's wide gray eyes smiling to me, I saw in them the light of a great recognition, of something never before seen or apprehended; and that sudden recognition on her part of what I had myself just discovered for the first time filled us with indescribable happiness to which we paid homage in silence. What was there to say? We already knew with every fiber of our existence that after the first bright lyrical cry of body and heart has united two beings, what binds them together most deeply, most truly, yes, everlastingly, is that love for each other which flows through an identical, absolutely certain faith about the world. And I knew that just as this woman was to me the dearest in all creation, so there would never be another who would understand as truly and as sympathetically all the gradations of my soul, or to whom I could reveal with such candor, as to the final beloved witness, all that I was and hoped to be.

Afterward, when I kissed her auf Wiedersehen at the railway station, she said:

"Do get to work on your book, Paul. You can make it something really useful if you try."

She said that to prevent herself from weeping, for we had not been separated once in all those three years; but she wept a little anyway, and when the train vanished into the night, my heart stood absolutely still for a moment and a great silence filled the dark world.

For several weeks I went about my work as in a dream. Was it really possible that I had once led a complete life without Peggy?

I could not believe that for a second. Her absence cut my life in half, and the better part of it was in Spain. Every morning I ran down for the mail, impatient and full of hope, knowing all the time that I had no right to expect a letter so soon; and when the first letter did arrive, I was so excited I could hardly read it.

After that I lived on her letters, poor shadows of the absent reality, yet the only living thread outside of memory that bound me to it. Man is a queer being. I wanted Peggy to be happy, I wanted that more than anything in the world; yet it made me glad when she wrote from Madrid that she was unhappy without me, that absence intensified her desire and need for me, that she missed me terribly and yet I seemed to be near her all the time. She wrote a good deal about Spain, of course, and sent copies of her articles for me to file in her steel cabinet, and enclosed photos of herself talking with Loyalist soldiers and with La Pasionaria; but always she added that wherever she went, whatever she was doing, my face was ever before her, she always saw me approaching and felt that now, now she had but to stretch out her hand and she would touch me; and, alas! it was only her wish that she had seen. And the strange thing about it was that I read all this without vanity. Oh, it had long, long ago passed beyond vanity, completely and irrevocably beyond it. I read this and knew it was true because that was exactly how I felt and how I wrote her; and I could only count the slow days that dragged on one after the other between me and her return, and watch her lovely face appear and vanish in the crowd along the boulevards, the university classroom, the living room at home, so empty and so lonely without her.

Then, surmounting all personal feeling, Peggy's letters would flame with the great war of liberation which she now witnessed with her own eyes. Writing about Spain these days, she no longer said "they"; she always said "we," so deeply had she identified her own being with the cause of a people that was the cause of the world. "These are painful, difficult, tragic days for us," she wrote when the forces of intervention swooped down upon the Asturias. But she shared the courage of the Spanish people as well as their agony. "We shall win, despite all reverses!" That courage, that certainty in eventual victory followed her wherever she went; and her faith in the people of Spain was mingled with joy at being able to help their children.

After a month in Madrid, she went into the provinces. She made attempts to get in touch with Kurt and Hans through the headquarters of the International Brigade at Albacete, but had as yet received no reply. Helga had not had a letter from Hans Bayer for some time, and I had not heard from Kurt. We assumed there were good reasons for that.

"After all," Peggy wrote me from Andalusia, "Kurt and Hans must be pretty busy. A veteran like you ought to know there are plenty of things to do at the front. I'm sure we shall hear from them as soon as the fighting lets up a little."

Then she added:

"I'm pretty busy here myself. I've just gone through the villages of Constantia, Carmona, Posada, Peneflor, Alane and Palma del Rio. The barbarism of the enemy is incredible unless you see it. These villages are undefended. They have no troops at all. Yet the rebels come here regularly in Italian and German planes and bomb the women and children in the streets. I've just been through one bombing. The streets were full of children when the rebel planes came and poured down their hellish fire. I was shopping in the local bodega at that moment. I ran out into the street, grabbed two children—they could not have been more than five or six years old—and ran with them to the nearest shelter. The children, thank heaven, escaped alive, and I am in perfect health and please don't worry about me. But one old woman loaded with bundles could not run fast enough. We buried her this morning. Tonight I am traveling by automobile to the next village and will write you from there. I love you with all my heart and think of you always. Do take care of yourself, dear, and stick to that book on human freedom. That is also part of the great fight. I wish you could hold me in your arms . . ."

After this letter there were two weeks of silence. I felt uneasy, wrote every day to Peggy's forwarding address in Madrid, and finally wired the British consulate and Hague's office to check on her whereabouts.

The next day I had a miserable time in my classes. I lectured absent-mindedly, and I'm afraid I made my students feel that the rise and evolution of Christianity in Europe was remote, unimportant and dull, which was certainly not the case. My mind wandered a little; and, though it was not the lesson for the day at all, I found myself talking about the sixth century church in Spain. It was a rainy afternoon late in November. The classroom was gloomy. My students seemed unreal and very far away. And when I caught the sound of my own voice, it seemed to be talking nonsense.

"The power of the episcopate grew steadily in Spain," I heard myself saying.

Why? Who cares? I would give ten years of my life right now to be assured Peggy is safe in Andalusia.

"The bishops often clashed with the lay aristocracy. But they exerted far more influence than the latter."

Perhaps she wrote me a letter and it was delayed. War. Worse still, civil war.

"Now please note, ladies and gentlemen; in Spain the Catholic Church did not oppose private ownership of churches as such. Miss Poeschl, what do we mean by the private ownership of churches?"

Miss Poeschl, a rather plump, dowdy girl with glasses, rose from her seat. Why did I call on her, of all people? I am really rattlebrained today.

"The private ownership of churches?" Miss Poeschl said.

What awful voices students can have when their professor is secretly agitated about his private affairs.

"Yes. The right of *Eigenkirche*."

"Oh, the right of *Eigenkirche*." She wrinkled her forehead to show she was giving the matter her most earnest consideration. "It originated in the fifth century. Chapels and churches were erected on the great Roman estates by their owners. They appointed church officers just as they did other economic officials."

"Thank you, Miss Poeschl. You astonish me with your erudition today. Mr. Leoning, what was the function of the privately appointed church officials?"

The tall young man with the stooped shoulders thought a moment, then dragged his lanky body listlessly out of his chair.

"They supervised the divine service," he said in a voice whose high pitch never failed to make the class smile. "They had to see to it that no heathen cult or idolatry was carried out on their land. And they collected alms."

"That's correct, Mr. Leoning. Five centuries after the great, liberating Christian idea had regenerated Europe with its communal dream, there are battles for church ownership, the alienation, sale and exchange of church property. We are no longer dealing with the Sermon on the Mount but with the seignorial system. In Spain . . ."

Involuntarily I hesitated; the word stirred in me the very feelings I wanted to forget here and which therefore forced themselves upon me all the more strongly.

"In Spain . . . the immense power of the bishops made it possible for them to oppose the economic encroachments of the feudal lords. Bishops and lords alike were Christians. Both groups formally subscribed to the gospel that the meek shall inherit the earth, but this did not prevent them from quarreling as to which of them should tax the meek."

The rain was beating steadily on the gray windows. My watch said 3:40. This class, the last for the day, would be over in ten minutes. If I could hold out that long, if I did not myself die of the

boredom of the sixth century Eigenkirche, I would rush down to various offices and see if there was at last news from Peggy.

"The feudal lords of Spain," I said with a desperate effort, "insisted on their right to collect half the income derived from the people's alms. The national church council at Braga adopted a resolution in 572 which shows this practice had been going on for some time. The church was opposed to it, but had so far been unable to stop it. However: the power of the bishops was growing tremendously. Now they saw their chance of making the private churches financially independent of secular influence and to secure their own authority over them. The episcopate raised an outcry against the *tributaria conditio*, upon condition of which these private churches had been founded."

The bell rang and the class broke up. I went to my office at once and started to pack my brief case. There was a knock on the door. Full of hope and fear, I opened it. Thank heaven! It was a telegraph messenger. I signed the slip and tipped the boy, but it was not until I sat down at my desk that I realized he had not brought me a telegram at all.

It was a package wrapped in brown paper, I tore this open with trembling fingers and tried to gather my turbulent thoughts. Who would send me, out of a clear sky, a copy of *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars* by Caius Suetonius Tranquillus? I turned to the flyleaf for a possible inscription, and there found scrawled lightly in pencil:

Bristol
4:30
Q 16-739

I rushed to the street, put up my coat collar against wind and rain, and hailed the first taxi near the university gate. It was almost half past four when I reached the Bristol. I told the taxi driver to wait and dashed toward the café. Under the wet awning a faintly familiar voice said quietly:

"May I trouble you for a light, sir?"

Egon Fuchs wore a heavy raincoat and a black fedora shaded his face, and underneath the wide brim his blue eyes looked at me steadily without smiling. My hand shook as I lit a match and held it to his cigarette. He took two quick puffs, removed the cigarette from his thin lips and said softly through a pale smile.

"We always seem to meet in the rain. I know your address. Wait for me there."

By the time Egon Fuchs arrived at my apartment, soaking wet,

I had some brandy on the table and was smoking my pipe nervously. I took his hat and coat, offered him a seat and a drink and noticed he had not changed much since that strange night on the Semmering.

"Forgive me for calling on you this way," he said. "That's the way I work. I flew in from Madrid this morning."

My heart stood still.

"I've got some bad news for you," he said, "Your friend Hans Bayer was captured by the rebels three weeks ago."

One anxiety drives out another. It was painful news, but there was a curious relief in its wake.

"What happened to Kurt?" I asked anxiously.

"They captured him in the same action. I am sorry you know me only as a messenger of bad tidings."

"I hope they are safe."

"What does one call safe these days? At first the rebels were going to shoot them. Then they decided that was too good for men like Kurt and Hans."

"They hanged them?"

"They turned our friends over to the Nazis. Kurt and Hans are now in a concentration camp somewhere along the border where Germany touches Austria and Switzerland."

I felt the sweat gathering under my armpits.

"Have some brandy," I said, filling our glasses.

I would take another drink, then perhaps I would dare to ask. Egon Fuchs took his drink in one swallow, and smiled grimly to show he knew perfectly well that brandy is not drunk that way; then he passed his firm hand through his thick, yellow hair and said:

"I have some news from your wife."

"Thank God!" I exclaimed.

"They sent you a letter through the regular mail from Madrid. It gives all the details and all the apologies and will explain everything. But I got here first by plane. Dangerous flying weather and damned nasty. But here I am." His hand was steady as he lit a fresh cigarette. "I have some special business in Vienna," he hastened to add. "For the Underground."

"How is Peggy?"

"You have no idea what a wonderful reputation she has in Spain. Her work with the children was simply marvelous. Did she write you from Andalusia?" He did not give me a chance to reply but went on rapidly. "Yes, I remember she did. The peasants adored her. She loved the children very much, and they loved her. A truly wonderful mother in a way."

"How is she?" I said eagerly.

He looked at me for a moment with his calm blue eyes and said:

"Let's have another drink."

I filled our glasses again and we emptied them at the same time.

"When the planes came flying over that Andalusian village the other day," Egon Fuchs said in a low voice, "she was out walking with some comrades. A group of children were playing near the stone wall of a garden. They heard the roar of the planes and ran out into the middle of the street crying: 'They are ours!' Everybody looked up into the clear afternoon sky. One of the children, a little girl of seven named Carmencita, was very attached to your wife. Carmencita shaded her eyes with her little hand and said: 'Look, look, compañera, they are ours!' Your wife looked up into the sky again and cried out: 'No, no, little one, come to me! They are not ours!'"

I heard every word of what Egon Fuchs said, I heard it very clearly, but I do not know with what part of me I heard it, for the whole of my body was already numb.

"She started toward the children, and at that moment there was a terrific detonation and the first bomb came crashing down into the street. Later, when the debris was cleared, they found her near the garden wall."

The man's face was very far away, and I tried with all my strength to hear what he was saying, and his voice was very far away, too.

"She had fallen on her back, and her eyes were open toward the skies she could no longer see, and her arms held tightly to her silent heart the broken little body of Carmencita."

The man coughed awkwardly, far, far away.

"There was nothing to do but to bury her in the village cemetery, the one on the slope of the hill nearest the village. The peasants now call her the English Madonna of the Hills."

As I collapsed, there flashed through my shattered being, like a swift, blinding vision, the grateful memory that before she was lost forever she had heard all of my love for her uttered without the least reserve.

9

*I have asked to be
Where no storms come,
Where the green swell is in the havens dumb
And out of the swing of the sea.*

—Heaven-Haven.

THEY WOULD NOT GIVE ME a leave of absence from the university and the government refused me a passport to Spain. What was there left? The death of those we love is always terrible and even the best of consolations is only a mask. Religion and philosophy have given men armor against the most awful of all our foes, but no weapon wherewith to destroy him. We have been told we do not really die, that the soul survives in some other world, endless and sublime, where in the realms beyond time you may stand face to face with the invisible presence of God or broil forever in the pitiless fires of damnation. And if we cannot believe in the life everlasting and in the resurrection of the body or the reincarnation of the soul, we are urged to accept the inevitable manfully. It can't be helped; be strong; make the best of it! Death is the lot of all that lives, no single thing abides, even the systems and their suns shall go back swiftly to the eternal drift. Ataraxia! There is your sole wisdom and your sole defense. Look on all things with a mind at peace. Yes, make of death a virtue, if you like. Flatter the ugly Fates; tell them how beautiful and kind they are; alter and sweeten their very names; perish swiftly with sword and shield on the threshold of Valhalla; rush from the eastern battlefield, a hero with your bowels in your hand, rush to the houris in paradise, and their eternal sensuality will make you whole again; or slide through the final gloom toward utter extinction, everlasting nothingness, content to know that all must be as though they had not been.

No, the great anodynes against the inevitable do not hold here. It was not nature, impartial and implacable, that killed first my father, then my wife. Six thousand years of civilization, two thousand years of the Sermon on the Mount; yet greed, rapacity and murder still rule the world. Try your ataraxia on that. Cull the

Greek and Latin for new names to cover your old evasions, to make your cowardice appear like courage, and your bloody animal stupidity like the loftiest wisdom. Issue your oily communiqués, gather your diplomatic conferences in marble halls, let the Axis bombs crash down upon the women and children of Spain. Man who fears death dispenses it more prolifically, more ruthlessly, more senselessly than nature; but you can prove the justice of everything. What is the good of having brains if you cannot show the iron necessity of folly and crime? Everything that is, is right; everything that was had to be just so. The important thing is to keep power, and power is no power without the power of inflicting death. So there she lies in Andalusia, the English Madonna of the Hills, and the Warrior of Christ is saving civilization with Hitler's aid.

For me there was nothing left but to work "in an earnest pursuit, which is like one wounded in hot blood, who for the time being scarce feels the hurt." It was impossible to remain in the home where she had brought me the greatest happiness I had ever known. The very walls spoke of her and rendered existence unendurable. I sold the furniture and took a small hotel room near the university. Here I lived alone surrounded by my books, manuscripts and pictures, haunted by the wide gray eyes which said I must go on living for the very idea in whose name she had died: I must go on living and working; I must finish the book she used to call "our child"; and I must go on believing in the future.

I was not really lonely, then, for they who believe are not lonely, and therefore cannot be entirely unhappy.

My book *Of Human Freedom* became a link with the past and my only possible admission card to the future. I spent many hours at the Library taking notes for it, and now at last I reached the point where I was able to write sections of it. I wrote as the mood struck me. Sometimes I would cover the civil wars in republican Rome; then I would leap forward in time to the French Revolution and the Declaration of the Rights of Man. Again, I would reverse the process, and in the same week would write several pages on Abraham Lincoln and move backward to the days when the Sermon on the Mount came as a new message of hope and emancipation to the men of the West. My unusual memory for historical material was extremely useful. It enabled me to compose whole pages in my mind while out walking, drinking in a café or sitting in the movies; and all I had to do when I came home was to put it all down on paper. I looked forward keenly to the completion and publication of my book. It had become the essence of my life, life itself; almost the final battleground, the last vibrant bond which, in the shadow of

unjust death, united me with the father and wife I had lost so cruelly; with the students who would shape a future I might never live to see; with the great, wide world, now so full of hatred and blood.

My work on the evolution of human freedom began with the remote past and was moving slowly toward the future, but even the ancient walls of the university could not keep out the ruthless present. The conflicts of the world found their way to the campus. The students shared the fears and hatreds of their elders.

There was that February afternoon, for instance, on which I was walking across the quadrangle on my way home, lost in the reveries that filled my brain to overflowing. In a few days, it would be the anniversary of my father's death. I would go down to the cemetery with Otto and Emma Weber and a few other friends from the years of Floridsdorf, and pay homage to his memory. I would place flowers on his grave and upon that of my mother, and think with love of them and with nostalgia of their vanished hopes for our times. What would Father say, if he were alive now, to the latest shadows looming over our doomed city? The Parcae spin their wheels too fast, but try to see truly. Figure out why Hitler has summoned our young chancellor to Berchtesgaden, why our chancellor has obeyed the summons, why Europe takes this calmly, like all the other omens of catastrophe. If Hans Bayer were here, he could tell you a thing or two about it. How quietly Helga takes his imprisonment in the concentration camp. She is greatly upset, but it is hard to say whether it's because she loves Hans in her curious way or because his capture has already begun to remove the aura which his power and firmness had lent her. I can never explain it right; but it's there just the same. She has her nose in the wind of great affairs, is full of dark forebodings about Loyalist Spain, and has begun to look up old friends in the more exalted circles whom she has neglected for a year. Hans will be able to stand concentration camp tortures; but Kurt? Poor, dear Kurt: they will kill him.

It was getting late. Through the dusk a group of students were coming out of one of the arched doorways. They laughed and chatted as they stopped to light cigarettes, cupping their hands in the wind. At this moment, a stooped figure came out of the doorway. The old man had a white beard, and his heavy coat collar stood high around his ears despite the warm weather. He tried to make his way through the crowd of students, but they blocked his passage.

"As I live and breathe," a tall, heavy-set student exclaimed. "The stinking Jew himself!"

At these words I stopped in the middle of the campus. They

touched my memory at a sensitive point. There flashed through my mind that spring day long ago when I was walking home from high school with Helga's brother and Teddy Hoffman's son, and saw young ruffians tormenting a Jewish boy who later became my friend and companion-in-arms on the Piave.

"He's got a Jewish beard!" another student said.

They were gathering around the old man on every side. He looked bewildered and frightened, and I recognized Professor Aaron Gross. I started to run across the campus toward the crowd.

"Take it away from him!" a student cried, seizing the old man's beard. The students leaped upon the old man and began to twist his beard. Several of them beat their fists against his head and his hat went flying in the wind. His glasses fell to the ground; one of the students crushed them with his heel. The old man began to bleed around the corners of his mouth, but did not cry out or say a word; he only lifted his trembling hands wildly in the air and tried to ward off the blows that rained upon him. At the moment I reached the crowd, he had fallen to the earth, face down, and the students were kicking his forehead. It was a terrible sound, like the pounding of a hollow wooden barrel. A thin crack appeared on the old man's right temple, and a jagged thread of blood crawled slowly down.

I seized the tallest and heaviest student by the coat collar, smashed my right fist into his face and threw him against the doorway. The crowd fell back, and one or two voices muttered my name. The student I had hit was holding a handkerchief to his bleeding nose.

"Naturally," I said to him, "it's not very pleasant. Don't do it to others, then."

My connection through my mother with a leading Catholic family was widely known. Several students removed their hats and said respectfully, "Yes, sir." Professor Gross was now on his hands and knees, trying painfully to stand up. I turned to the students again.

"Beat it," I said.

They scattered and ran across the campus through the gloomy dusk. I lifted the old man to his feet and helped him brush his coat. When I tried to wipe the blood from his forehead with my handkerchief, he smiled and said:

"It's nothing. We are used to this, and worse than this."

"I'm terribly sorry," I said. "It makes one ashamed to belong to the human race."

"Don't blame yourself," Professor Gross said kindly. "As long as you are not free, we cannot be free."

I was not listening carefully and did not grasp the meaning of those words. At that moment I was anxious to get the old man

home where Siegfried could take care of him. I called a taxi, and as he entered ahead of me, I was struck by his dignified calm. How long they have suffered, with what patience and fortitude. How long the world has humiliated and beaten them down. For what? Who benefited by all this senseless brutality against a helpless people? As the taxi jolted us through Vienna's streets, I said to him:

"It's a queer coincidence. When I was a boy, I met your son under precisely these circumstances. In those days I used to think everything would change for the better and we would never see things like this again. Well, here we are. It's like a nightmare that repeats itself over and over again."

"Are you surprised that this nightmare has come back after twenty-five years?" Professor Gross said, smiling. "We've had it over and over again for two thousand."

The taxi stopped in front of his house. He took out his handkerchief and wiped his face clean.

"Please don't come up," he said. "I don't want my wife to worry. She need not know anything about this. Siegfried will take care of me."

I paid the cab and helped the old man out into the street.

"Can you see without your glasses?" I asked.

"I'll manage, thank you."

Night had fallen and the dry wind was moaning across the gutter. I accompanied the old man into the hallway of his apartment house.

"Thank you," he said, shaking my hand. "Thank you. You have been more than kind."

I did not let go of his hand when I said:

"The whole thing is a puzzle to me. We have solved a thousand problems in theory, but even in theory this remains a mystery. Every explanation I read seems to be inadequate. Yet every schoolboy knows it did not start in 1933."

"It is a terrible problem," he said, "and its origins are lost in the mists of time. But how can you solve it when there are things about it which nobody dares to discuss?"

"It seems to me everything possible has been said about it."

"No, not everything." He looked at me intently, as if he wanted me to guess his thought, and added: "Think of the quarrel between the Emperor Theodosius and St. Ambrose over the burning of the synagogue at Callinicum. Think of all it implied for the future of the Western mind, I mean in its very deepest layers." He smiled gently and shook my hand again. "Good night, dear Paul," he said. "Don't let this upset you too much. It's part of a much greater problem, and you are not the one to solve it. But you are marvelously good. You are too bookish, perhaps, and yet in some ways you are

not bookish at all. You are very good and you understand the meaning of suffering and of freedom. You can't find the words for it all, you can't express yourself properly, but you feel the real things. Your heart is right."

Then, as if embarrassed by what he had just said, by the gratitude it revealed and the shame that such gratitude was necessary at all in our times, he hastily said good night and went up the stairs.

Walking home, I did think of St. Ambrose and the synagogue. For the scholar the story was interesting enough. Christianity was originally a revolutionary movement hated by the world. The Romans accused the followers of the new faith of being cannibals and atheists who preached and practiced sexual license and ritual murder—the very accusations which Christians later made against the Jews. Wild charges have always been made against revolutionary movements and always will be; political hatred always spawns the craziest fantasies.

There were many reasons why the Romans hated the followers of Christ. One of them is usually ignored even by historians. Like all heralds of a new era, the Christians looked upon themselves as a chosen people. They actually called themselves the Third Race. St. Peter had told them: "God hath made a new covenant with us; for the ways of the Greeks and Jews are old, but we are they that worship him in a new way in a third race." He also told them: "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." And St. Justin proclaimed: "We are the true high-priestly race of God."

The Romans disliked the Christians for many reasons, but this was one of the most important, that they called themselves the Third Race, the chosen people, peculiar, distinct, better than all, destined to usher in a new world. Such things rankle; they rankle most, perhaps, when they are true; and they lead to persecution. The Romans hounded, imprisoned and beheaded the Christians, and the true believers found it convenient to blame the Jews for these persecutions. This was one of the things that divided Christians and Jews within the Roman Empire.

"The synagogues are the source of persecution," said the fiery Tertullian.

You will find statements of that kind in Origen and Celsus, too. The moment the new faith was taken over by the nobility of the empire, the moment the gospel of the meek became the institution of the strong, it began to loathe the womb from which it had sprung.

I stopped at a small restaurant near my hotel and had some supper. I was getting used to eating alone; and since Andalusia, a

dozen guests could share my table and I would still be alone. The food was not good and the coffee was dull. Vienna was rapidly going to pieces.

The early Christians were at odds with the world and with the Jews and, like every revolutionary movement, they were split into many warring factions. The sects persisted even after the first stages of the revolution had been completed and Christianity had become the official creed of the empire. The hatred against the Jews also persisted. It was part of the theological structure. You could not have the official saga of the Passion and omit the alleged villain. And that was how St. Ambrose came to quarrel with the Emperor Theodosius in the fourth century.

What did Professor Gross really have in mind?

Toward the end of that century, the Christians of the little town of Callinicum in Mesopotamia fell into a rage against the Jews. With the knowledge of their bishop and the aid of certain monks, they burned down the local synagogue. At the same time, they also burned down the church of the heretical sect of Valentinians, followers of Christ who refused to accept the orthodox dogma. Even in those days there were already many reservations to the gospel of universal love. On hearing of the outrage, the Emperor Theodosius became furious. He was always especially irritated by violations of the public peace, and he considered this an act of crass injustice. He therefore ordered the governor of the district to punish the monks who had aided in the fire, and to make the bishop of Callinicum rebuild the synagogue at his own expense. At once St. Ambrose, who was then at Aquileia, sent the Emperor an indignant letter.

I paid my check and went home. In my study I turned on the lamp, lit my pipe and looked around at the photos of my father, my mother and Peggy which stood on my desk in simple frames; and at the wall opposite on which hung a large colored print of Gruenewald's Crucifixion, that marvelous painting from the Issenheim altar in which the Christ, with the simple face and gnarled arms of a peasant, appears as the very last essence of human innocence, suffering and courage. Then I took down the *Lives of the Fathers* from the bookshelves and looked up the letter which St. Ambrose had sent to the Emperor.

What! St. Ambrose said. A bishop ordered to build a synagogue, and so left with no alternative but to be either a traitor to his church or a martyr for it? It was monstrous! To destroy a synagogue—was that guilt? If so, Ambrose approved of that guilt. What a shame to the church, what a triumph to the enemies of Christ, to see a synagogue built by a bishop! On a synagogue so

built, the Jews might well put the inscription: *Templum impietatis factum de manubiis Christianorum*.

The Emperor Theodosius was not moved by that letter; he refused to alter his decision about Callinicum. Let justice be done. But Ambrose preached a sermon against him from the ambo and whipped the imperial conscience without respite until the edict was repealed.

There were many points of vital importance for the future of Europe in this episode, among them the principle of Ambrose that "priests ought to judge laymen, not laymen priests." It is also a fact that the church in its wisdom has not ratified in these delicate points all the anathemas of Ambrose. But Professor Gross must have had something else in mind, and it was true there were many things you could not discuss. After a millennium and a half the deadly prejudice persists and not all its causes are contemporary. The conflicts of the past haunt the depths of Europe's soul like some childhood trauma which has never been frankly faced, therefore never truly resolved. Just what was the continuity on that score? I could not work that out in my book on human freedom, for all such grandiloquent projects are extremely provincial in the end. Think of it, I would not even touch on that half of the human race which inhabits Asia and Africa! The best you can do at this time—and your ignorance is largely to blame—is to outline general trends in the traditional pattern and hope that wiser minds will seek in the facts themselves some key to the future. Whatever thoughts Professor Gross had intended to inspire with the parable of St. Ambrose and the Emperor had to give way to the more immediate, the more terrible memory of the beating which the old man had received that very afternoon on the campus. Its meaning was only too clear. Nowadays that kind of horror was the shadow which always preceded the Nazi advance. What strange things must fill the ancient, spacious soul of the Jew, the one constant in our variable world, the mind that remembers everything from Pharaoh to Hitler—and outlives it all. I could never hope to understand this people, so thoroughly like ourselves in essence, yet forced to appear different, as long as the West insisted on maintaining old lines of demarcation deep down in its soul. At this moment, however, I was still full of the incident on the campus; and they impressed me as the survivors of great anterior epochs of history, the bearers of a suffering and wisdom which they themselves hardly dared to formulate.

But what of us? This antagonism was but a drop on the great sea of hate sweeping the earth. How, then, does hate persist and flourish and devour all things in a world which has for centuries

accepted the gospel of love? It was not the Jews who destroyed Floridsdorf or bombarded the children of Andalusia; and it was far too late to tell me that economic charts alone would explain the new barbarism or show us how to wipe it off the face of the earth. The seat of hatred is not in the countinghouse but in the human heart.

It was midnight. The clock on the mantelpiece ticked off the endlessly flowing moments. The face of time appeared friendly in the dark of night, and I became aware of the silence that surrounded me like the air itself, the serene stillness in which thought has its most essential being. I opened the center drawer of my desk and took out the manuscript of my book. *Of Human Freedom*, said the title page ambiguously. Here was the completed section on Renaissance and Reformation. How can one make the noble dead the noble living? Erasmus, Cromwell, Milton—what men! What a time of tumult and transformation! Seeming confusion; agony and blood only too real; and in the end everything seems clear and good; the great light that comes has always been there, hidden behind the vast clouds of unborn time; and after the great light another great darkness.

And another great light?

The more I thought of it, the more I became convinced that all the historical parallels employed to describe our own time had something false about them. Analogies are dangerous unless you know they are metaphors. In that sense, there is one great period which most resembles ours, one vast historic metaphor which is apt—the disintegration of the Roman Empire and the rise of Christianity. Now, too, old faiths are dying and new faiths are spreading their mighty wings for their great flight into the future; and within the struggles of parties, programs, sects and whole nations there is the life-and-death current of it all, two ways of existence opposed in mortal combat: slavery and freedom.

Mankind has been suffering and struggling for centuries; and at the center of all that blood and hope is the idea of liberty. At one end of the Western saga, Christianity; at the other, socialism; and between them flame a thousand dreams various in shape and scope, speaking a thousand conflicting tongues; yet the essential aspiration is always there, and its name is freedom, and once more we are inexorably summoned to fight for it or die.

And yet, would this aspiration be possible at all in these particular forms without the Christian saga? I mean this only in the sense in which my father used to say: "Without the slavery of the ancient world, there would have been no modern socialism." Where are the spiritual roots of all our modern gospels of freedom? If the

Sermon on the Mount had not taught the equality of all men in the sight of God, would there have been the Reformation as we know it, or the Puritan Revolution, or the Enlightenment, or the Declaration of Independence with its insistence that all men are created equal, or the Communist Manifesto with its prophetic call for the abolition of classes? Do not all these evolve in the long run from the mother idea of the equality of all men—an idea unknown in that universal form through four thousand years of history from the Pharaoh Akhenaton to the Emperor Tiberius?

Perhaps the story of freedom which I was trying to tell ought to start right there. What labor that would mean! I would have to recapture by sheer force of imagination the course of the tremendous Christian revolution. Perhaps it contained laws we ought to know; not laws of theology or mechanics; not how to hurl a spear, fire a machine gun or increase the export of lard; but laws of human motivation and conduct which, for all the changes they endure, persist in forms familiar through the years—if they do persist.

One thought presented itself at once. Christianity developed through sectarian conflict, through violence, through the terrorization of opponents, critics and heretics; yet today its great moral teaching is at our disposal, ours to grow by if we choose. Isn't that what always happens? We repudiate the atrocities of men, done in the name of every creed and every ideal, done always in the heat of combat and out of fear; we repudiate these and keep what is good. "O Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name!" cried Mme. Roland on the scaffold in the Place de la Concorde. Crimes have indeed been committed in liberty's name. Does that mean that men prefer slavery? Despite the crimes, liberty remains something to be desired above all other goods, to be fought for when it is threatened or taken away, to be defended with our life blood and that of our sons.

It's a metaphor, and not an easy one. You are ignorant: how can you be certain that your arrogant penetration into the mysteries of the past will lead you to anything except greater confusion?

Oh, how golden, how tantalizing is the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge! But remember, to eat it means to earn everything, not your bread alone, by the sweat of your brow and the blood of your heart. Eat, then, and suffer.

And don't forget the commonplace, the technical, the real world. You will have to get Uncle Peter's help in rounding up all the important church histories and documents at the Library.

There were various anodynes. It was at this time that I fell into the habit of frequenting the movie theaters of Vienna. Occasionally I would go with Helga or Siegfried or Uncle Peter or the Webers;

but as a rule I preferred to go alone. Like everybody else, I liked the films that came to us from Hollywood, alive with glamorous, remote figures and those swift, meaningless deeds which seemed to be the very essence of our time, until you went out of doors and found there was no thread, or only the sheerest, between the thrilling dream you had just experienced with the minds of other people, filtered through the steel nerves of a machine, and the throbbing reality around you. Those films were exciting nevertheless; so were the ones which came out of Moscow, gigantic with the luminous upsurge of other days; and the experiments with space, time and light of the avantgarde, which had taken over several of nature's departments not without success. Everything was there in the darkness of the movie house—American romance, Russian revolution, storm over Asia, the tentative creation of new forms; worlds of fantasy wherein you could lose yourself for hours and live through imagined victories of love, beauty and justice, swiftly, intensely and always, always vicariously.

But the best anodyne was work. I made my classes study harder than ever and took on the added burden of lectures off the campus. Any place was good for these where the crowd was large and the faces anonymous, where you could pretend you were not alone. I liked especially to lecture for the League for the Rights of Man, of which I was a member. And at the end of the day there was always *Of Human Freedom*. I wrote feverishly now and shamelessly exploited students and friends to advance the necessary research.

Uncle Peter, I must say, was extremely obliging in this respect. He not only looked up rare books and ancient manuscripts for me at the National Library where he worked; but once, hot on the trail of material for me, he phoned me at the university in great excitement, and said that as soon as my classes were over I must meet him at the Bibliothek fuer religionpsychologischeforschung. He had a perfectly wonderful find for me, he said; and his voice was so full of mystery and urgency that as soon as I could I rushed over to the Library for Research into Religious Psychology.

I found Uncle Peter waiting for me at a flat table near the section marked *Scriptores Antiquissimae*. His eyes sparkled with extraordinary animation and he was rubbing his hands with some secret delight.

"What do you think has showed up, Paul?" he said, rising. "You read some of those ancient Latin dialects, don't you? Etruscan and Umbrian, let's say. Yes, yes, you do, I remember you do! Well, look at this!"

He opened a drawer in one of the large filing cabinets and took out a roll of parchment. I helped him flatten it upon the table near by, and looked with astonishment and a scholar's joy at the long scroll yellow with the centuries. It was ragged in spots, there were

two large holes near the center and the script was not legible in all places.

"I'd forgotten this for nearly fifteen years!" Uncle Peter exclaimed. "It came back to me suddenly only last night. How stupid! Do you remember that pilgrimage I made to Rome long ago? While I was there an Italian archaeologist of my acquaintance found this old manuscript in the earth outside the capital. He presented it to me for our university. You were in Paris then."

He laughed gaily and his aged eyes crinkled with good humor.

"Would you believe it? Nobody at the university knew how to read it. They made out finally that it was in the Umbrian or Etruscan dialect, but they could not read it. Isn't it lucky you are one of those cranks that go in for the most esoteric things?"

I glanced at the yellow, ragged parchment on the table and said:

"It is in the Umbrian dialect, that's clear."

"I tried everybody. I took it to the Archaeological-Epigraphic Seminar, but it was useless. They could not make it out. Besides, they were too busy preparing papers on the birth of Athens; the origin and propagation of the Roman tribes; the banners, standards and pennants of the Roman legions; the travels of Pausanias in Greece; on Homeric weapons and Maecean earrings, not to speak of lectures on the bows and arrows of ancient peoples."

"They are humanists," I said, "and this is a Christian document. Offhand, I should say it looks like something out of the fourth century A.D. or thereabouts. Did you try the Seminar for Economic and Cultural History? They are right in the middle of the Christian era."

"What do you mean the middle?" Uncle Peter said suspiciously. "They deliver papers on the development of the large landed estates in the Merovingian empire, romanticism in the Middle Ages, and that sort of stuff. The fourth century is entirely out of their line. Besides, they can't read Umbrian, so that settles them. I know because I tried them fifteen years ago, then I gave up in despair and filed the manuscript away here. It was only last night, as I said, while listing additional material for you, that I suddenly remembered this. You can't get out of it, my dear boy. It's yours to decipher, if you can!"

I had to be cautious. Every profession has its rivalries and jurisdictional disputes.

"Are you sure nobody will mind my borrowing it?" I asked. "Suppose I am lucky enough to decipher it. What will the archaeologists say?"

"Never mind what they will say," Uncle Peter insisted. "Anyway, what has this to do with archaeology? This has to do with the Christian era, the gospel of love." He became somewhat con-

fused and stammered: "What I mean is, if this manuscript is really from the fourth century, it may contain something about the Fathers of the Church." He rolled up the parchment and added quickly: "Take it, take it, and God bless you."

I took the Umbrian manuscript home with me, and late that night, after my regular work, unrolled it under the lamplight which fell on my desk and examined it closely. It was a fragmentary affair. The holes near the center, the loose strips that dangled from the edges cut heavily into the narrative. It would be no simple thing to decipher this; much time would be needed; but if it was really an unknown document of the fourth century, then it would be worth all the trouble that lay ahead of me. I counted five hundred and sixty lines of text all told, then started to read from the beginning.

At first I could only make out a name which appeared a number of times in various parts of the manuscript—the name *Eusebius*. Then, after struggling with the lines for over an hour, I was able to make out some phrases and sentences.

One thing was certain. This manuscript did date from the fourth century of the Christian era, and referred to a man named Eusebius who wrote of himself in the first person, as if setting down a confession of some kind. I knew of course that we have records of many men named Eusebius. In the fourth century, there was a bishop of Rome as well as a presbyter of Cremona who bore that name. The great bishop of Caesarea was called Eusebius; so was that cousin of Pamphilus who was chief religious adviser to the Emperor Constantine and author of the famous *Ecclesiastical History*. I knew also that the Catholic calendar contains twenty-eight saints named Eusebius. But the more I pondered over this mysterious Umbrian manuscript in the dead silence of the night the more I became convinced it did not refer to any of those. They would have written in Latin or Greek, and not like this strange man in an ancient forgotten dialect. There could be no doubt about it. This was a different Eusebius altogether, one who had hitherto been utterly lost to history. A truly valuable manuscript, then, a real find!

Examining the parchment again carefully, I made several important discoveries. One of the most remarkable things about the manuscript was the appearance and reappearance, like a Greek chorus, of a single phrase which always came in fragments, without beginning, middle or end. I caught it in three different places and always it was ravaged and broken by time and—who knows?—perhaps by the hands of man, too; for now the damage appeared as a jagged hole, then again as if someone had scraped a blade across the thought, hoping to destroy it forever by violence. And all three

times the broken phrase appeared in this identical form: MEN . . . CAPACITY . . . VALUE

There was another remarkable thing, too. After they had been deciphered, it was clear that several sentences read as if there had been a trial of some kind, but what kind of trial I could not make out. Was Eusebius tried by a Roman court during one of the great persecutions launched against the Christians? Was he a heretic facing an episcopal synod of fellow believers in the gospel of love, freedom and redemption? Whether orthodox, Arian, Manichaean, Donatist or Gnostic, this strange, unknown figure whose confession lay before me had wanted to tell his story and it was up to me to decipher it. It would take months to unravel the writing; it might take years to trace its author through the darkest underbrush of recorded history; and now the merciless clock said two A.M. and I could do no more this night.

I turned out the light and went to bed; but, as often happened at times like these, sleep would not come. I lay in the silence thinking, and through the darkness of the night I was haunted by the shadowy figure of St. Eusebius. Why did I call him a saint? He was not in the calendar; nobody had ever heard of him. But there it was, and it was already too late to do anything about it; the deepest, unpenetrated layers of my mind insisted there had been something saintly about this unknown man out of the fourth century; he filled my mind for good as St. Eusebius, and laid upon me the sacred obligation to decipher his story and proclaim it to all who would care to listen. How anxious men are to record their doings, to be remembered by posterity, to find a place in history as a way of defeating time and overcoming death. This unknown Eusebius also had wanted to triumph over death and time, and for that purpose had set down his story laboriously on parchment in a Latin dialect already obsolete in his own time, as if seeking added aid in the very antiquity and obscurity of his words. Yet see, for centuries death and time had overcome him. The record was there, but it had been lost in the earth of his native land for fifteen centuries. No one had read his story until now; therefore, it had not really existed. In spite of his most anxious efforts, Eusebius had been wholly mortal. Like most men, who must be content to be as though they had not been, this saint had been forgotten.

Yet see how capricious chance can be. The last remnant of the desire, will and hope of Eusebius had at last been discovered. But what good did it do? The manuscript told us very little about the man whose greatest longing it must have been at one time that posterity should raise him to the altar. But had I not instinctively fulfilled this longing of Eusebius? Had I not, as a member of

what was for him posterity, begun to think of him as St. Eusebius? Nevertheless, the mystery remained. Unless I could decipher the whole manuscript and trace the entire story behind it, unless I could find out who this Eusebius had been and what had befallen him during his brief span of life upon this earth, the forgotten saint would remain forgotten. Only his name might perhaps be recorded: *Eusebius No. 29 (4th cent.?)*.

And now, in the darkness and silence of the night, there came to me a new realization of the historian's place in the world. It was within my power to bring Eusebius to life again, to give him that immortality which all men crave when they transmit their names to their children, set up monuments and memorials to themselves, inscribe their names and dates on tombstones, write books and paint pictures which, long after the body is dust, burn on through the years with the glorious light of the spirit. Oh, not to die wholly, not to be forgotten forever, to conquer time, to evade the last, crushing blows of remorseless death, to appeal to posterity for a little sympathy and understanding, to find in future generations that fragment of love which our contemporaries deny us and without which life can be a terrible burden. Yes, the fate of Eusebius is in my hands. I can give him that second life in time which he wanted when he set his thoughts down on parchment.

And that also would be an act of love; for truly, as the ancient sage tells us, love is of immortality; mortal nature seeks to be immortal, and this is to be attained only by generation, since generation leaves behind a new existence in place of the old; and generation may be of the mind as well as of the body, and we live not only through the children of our loins but also through those of our brain, through the hopes we set down upon parchment for strangers to read with understanding and love far off in coming vistas of time.

And who knows? Perhaps in writing his manuscript, Eusebius thought of those luminous words in the *Symposium*, that all men do all things in hope of glorious fame and immortal virtue, for they desire immortality; and if that idea could so inspire the pagans, devotees of body and mind, how much more would it inspire a fourth century Christian like Eusebius, for whom the body was nothing and the soul everything, and who perhaps had even taken vows of chastity which precluded his having any children but those of the soul? I would do this thing, then; I would fulfill the dream of Eusebius; rescue from oblivion the doings and sufferings of the enduring man. To decipher and publish his manuscript would be part of my most important work along with my story of the age-long struggle of humanity for freedom. And since the Eusebian

manuscript came out of those far-off centuries which are yet so near, those eras of historical sunsets and dawns when men first conceived of their universal equality in the sight of God, perhaps the Eusebian manuscript itself would throw some light on freedom, the deepest of human desires and the greatest of all the world's riddles.

Imperceptibly, as happens to all of us in such moments, I had begun to think of myself. Was not my own manuscript on human freedom an attempt to evade the final effects of death and time?

And at once there came to me in the darkness and stillness of the night the beloved face of her who lay beneath the earth upon the hillside of an Andalusian village; the dark hair, the lovely, oval face; the wide gray eyes smiling as they used to smile when she called my proposed book "our child"; and I was overwhelmed by a powerful desire to go on living, and the certainty that I had something to live for, something perhaps, however small, to throw out upon the vast, eternally animate stream of human thought and aspiration; and it seemed to me that I heard the voice of the everlastingly beloved urging me in the night:

"Write your book with all your heart and soul and will; write it with all the love you so richly gave me; write it with all the ardor and ability which the memory of me can inspire; write it with all the devotion to human freedom which bound our two souls so firmly and deeply together; write like a soldier who offers a life for his people in a war of liberation; pour out the words freely, as if they were your heart's blood: write as if this were your last act on earth, the one deed by which you want eternity to judge you. Think nothing of the faraway future; write for those who live and suffer with you in this time of immeasurable agony and boundless hope: write for the just and the uncorrupt; for truly, truly there are those upon this earth who have not forgotten how to listen."

Oh, how clearly and beautifully her voice now came to me in the darkness and stillness of the night, and it followed me to the farthest frontiers of sleep whispering:

"Do not be afraid, beloved. Write freely and truly. In the end, the world is kind. Cast your book upon the waters . . ."

BOOK FOUR

Behold, thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthened the weak hands. Thy words have upholden him that was falling, and thou hast strengthened the feeble knees. But now it is come upon thee, and thou faintest; it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.

—*The Book of Job.*

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*Rages in this packed town, in this wilderness of hands,
beast over mankind, ruling with cruel mark. . .*

—David Wolff.

WE HAVE REACHED a crucial turning point, doctor, and I shall go ahead directly with my story.

I was engrossed in my work at the university, full of my book on human freedom and patiently deciphering the Eusebian manuscript when the great catastrophe came. The immediate events preceding the invasion have been told a thousand times and are known to all. Missing to give the tragedy true classic flavor was the slave with left hand burning unscorched, the surly lion glazing upon the orator without annoying him, men all in fire walking up and down the streets, the bird of night hooting and shrieking upon the market place at noonday and the soothsayer crying, "Beware the ides of March!" Everything else was there. At the beginning of the year, northern lights had flamed across the skies of Austria, a very rare thing, last seen when Prussia defeated our nation in the middle of the nineteenth century. Some people have even remembered seeing a bird of ill omen, a whitish freak of a sparrow which is supposed to appear only on the eve of terrible calamities. The weather had also been steadily unusual. For weeks there had been neither rain nor snow, and day after day the midwinter skies had been perfectly cloudless. The sun burned the earth bare and by March the ground became hot as in summer. Everything bloomed too early.

But the most remarkable portent of all was that down to the very last day, down to the moment when the boots of the conqueror actually tramped across the border, most people believed that Austria could still be saved. They believed this in spite of what had happened at Berchtesgaden. Hitler had taken our young chancellor for a ride, demanded the appointment of several Nazis to the Austrian cabinet, amnesty for all Nazi prisoners and the restoration of political rights to the brown party. The alternative was invasion. In the middle of February our government had accepted Hitler's terms. Our chancellor had formed a new cabinet in which the local Nazi leader Seyss-Inquart held the key post of minister of the interior. Nazi political prisoners were amnestied. Hitler made his position

clear with the usual falsehoods and threats; he announced his readiness to "save" the racial German comrades in Austria who were "constantly being afflicted with the severest suffering for their sympathy or unity with the whole nation, its destiny, its Weltanschauung." It was part of the fantastic and sanguinary Nazi myth in which assault always appears as self-defense and robbery is disguised as justice. In Berlin the Nazi papers were running scare-heads about disorders by Austrian workers—the old red herring. They said streams of blood were already flowing in the streets of Vienna, and screamed in calculated frenzy that the situation was beyond the control of our government. The Nazis never wait for omens; they manufacture them.

Watching these events, I could not help thinking that the end had already been foreshadowed on the Schmerlingplatz and in Floridsdorf when the power of the people was broken by force of arms. And as I tried to follow the complex diplomatic maneuvers I recalled what our great poet Hebbel had said nearly a century ago:

"O these dear Austrians! They are now considering how they can unite themselves with Germany without uniting themselves with Germany. . . ."

One of my friends, however, saw the whole matter quite realistically. Hague had cabled the Berchtesgaden story to his papers from Berlin and the day afterward had written me:

"It's the end of Austria. You may expect it any moment now, in spite—or because—of Hitler's solemn promises, pledges and treaties. As soon as things begin to happen, I'll fly down to Vienna to see the show and you."

His nose for news was unerring. He arrived on a Thursday, March tenth that was, and registered at the hotel where I was staying, and I saw a good deal of him in the turbulent days that followed. At the moment the whole country was boiling with shapeless expectation. Everyone looked forward anxiously to Sunday, when the people were to vote in the referendum on national independence. Tension, unrest and fear filled the air. Our chancellor sensed all the terror of the situation and announced that if necessary he would proclaim martial law—but the plebiscite must be held. The Nazis were furious. On Friday morning the Austro-German frontier at Salzburg was closed for an hour, and no explanation was given. Our chancellor called for men in the army reserve to maintain order over the weekend. The whole world realized the vital importance of the plebiscite, in which the people of our country were to answer the question:

"Are you for an independent, social, Christian, German, united Austria? Yes or no?"

These contradictory words were designed to appeal to all groups in the nation.

At high noon Hague picked me up at the university and we walked through the city. My friend at once began to take notes for the stories he was going to cable daily to his papers in New York, and several others he had recently bought in the Middle West and in California. From the south a violent wind swept Vienna. It was a hot, dry, almost tropical wind, and it whirled across the streets the circulars urging everyone to vote in Sunday's plebiscite for national independence. We watched trucks rolling by filled with workers demonstrating their loyalty to Austria. The workers were throwing out handbills to pedestrians in the street. Hague and I read some of them. It was clear that all the workers, socialists and communists alike, would vote in the plebiscite against the Anschluss, for the country's independence. Our chancellor could count on them, despite the Schmerlingplatz, despite Floridsdorf, despite the white terror. His troubles were in the exalted circles which were honey-combed with Nazi sympathizers. But everything was bound to turn out well. There would be free elections on Sunday; the workers would furnish the majority of the votes; independence was assured.

We passed the Stephansplatz and saw the windows which the Nazis had smashed in the monarchist offices, and Hague asked me about various friends. He was glad to hear that my Uncle Peter, Siegfried, old Professor Gross, Teddy Hoffman, the Webers, and other people we knew were all working for an overwhelming "yes!" in the plebiscite. There was nothing I could tell him about Helga. Since the news that Hans Bayer and Kurt Hertzfeld had been sent to a concentration camp she had been moving with her old crowd again and I had not seen much of her.

By the time we returned to our hotel and Hague made various phone calls, the catastrophe was showing its naked claws. Events moved so fast that day it was impossible to keep pace with them or to understand their full implications. I shall never forget Hague's pallor when he hung up the telephone receiver and said:

"Well, it beats me! Your government has just postponed the plebiscite."

We were sitting in his room drinking Scotch highballs. The radio was going all the time at low pitch, and we turned it on every time we caught the beginning of some news. Hague made phone calls, and talked with several American correspondents and Austrian officials. From his rapid chain-smoking I could tell things were happening fast. Soon he turned to me and said:

"I can't make this out at all. Everybody seems to agree they're not going to postpone the plebiscite. They're going to *cancel* it!"

"Why should they do that?" I said. "That would mean the absolute end."

"Don't ask me why. One man's guess is as good as another's." Hague turned on the radio louder and through the newscaster's patter he added: "It's obvious Germany is exerting tremendous pressure on your government. The Nazis are determined to get Anschluss at any cost."

"Let's drop that fancy word," I said. "It only obscures the reality—conquest and annexation to the Nazi realm."

I felt the sweat pouring down my body, and my shirt was wringing wet that sultry March day. Suddenly I saw Hague stop at the radio and cock his head to listen carefully. The newscaster was only saying what we already knew: Sunday's referendum had been canceled.

Hague rapped out one four-letter Anglo-Saxon word. We went out into the street again and mingled with the crowds. Dusk was gathering as we reached the Karlsplatz. The crowd grew very dense. We were engulfed in it, and it swept us along relentlessly past the Ring and the Opera, up to the Kaertnerstrasse to the offices of the German tourist bureau—long a Nazi propaganda center. Fanatical eyes gleamed around us with triumphant hate, and hysterical voices shouted:

"Sieg Heil! Sieg Heil! Heil Hitler! Heil Hitler! One people, one Reich, one Leader!"

They were celebrating the death of the plebiscite.

We made our way down the Ring to the Hotel Bristol. The café was full of American radio and newspaper correspondents—among them Ed Taylor, William Shirer, C. E. R. Gedye.

"It's all over," they told us. There had been an ultimatum from Berlin: no referendum or the German army will march into Vienna. To this ultimatum our chancellor had surrendered.

Our hotel was near by and we returned to it. I could not take it all in. It was like a nightmare in which vast creatures of doom crawl toward you with death in their eyes and you are completely paralyzed and cannot move. Hague insisted we steady our nerves with more Scotch. He turned on the radio and the room was filled with the soft strains of a Viennese waltz. It was unbearable.

"Turn that damned thing off," I said. "There's no room for Strauss in the shadow of Hitler."

The waltz stopped suddenly, and a newscaster's voice rasped:

"Attention, ladies and gentlemen! Here is an important announcement."

The radio station's identification signal ticked like a clock of

fate, then a voice came on, without any introduction whatever. It was that of our young chancellor:

"This day has placed us in a tragic and decisive situation. . . . The German government today handed President Miklas an ultimatum, with a time limit, ordering him to select as chancellor a person designated by the German government, and to appoint members of a cabinet on the orders of the German government; otherwise German troops would invade Austria. I declare before the world that the reports launched in Germany concerning disorders by the workers, the shedding of streams of blood, and the creation of a situation beyond the control of the Austrian government are lies from A to Z. . . . We have yielded to force since we are not prepared even in this terrible situation to shed blood. We have decided to order the troops to offer no resistance."

I listened with ice in my blood. Hague was near the radio. He looked at me with tense eyes and said:

"Have you heard anything so tragic in your life? His voice is breaking."

"And so," the chancellor's voice came over the air waves, "I take leave of the Austrian people with a German word of farewell uttered from the depth of my heart: God protect Austria!"

There was a brief silence, then an old record played our national anthem.

"I guess that's all," Hague said, and turned the radio off. Then he added, almost to himself: "Beautiful, tragic, civilized Austria—gone."

We went out to the telegraph office and there Hague filed his cable. The radio was going strong there. We heard the voice of Europe's first quisling, the Nazi minister of the interior, Seyss-Inquart, saying he considered himself responsible for order. His next words struck my brain like a bullet:

"The Austrian army must offer no resistance."

This was the first time I realized that the German troops had already crossed the border. And yet our chancellor had said exactly the same thing a short hour ago. He had said: "We have decided to order the troops to offer no resistance." I had not really heard those words. They were too painful. Now that they came from the enemy direct, I fully understood them. Austria had ceased to exist. We were now Ostmark, a province of the Third Reich. The enemy did not fire a shot and we had been conquered in one day. I was a man without a country.

It was impossible to go on working. I spent all my time with Hague now, rushing from one place to another in search of the latest

news; to the Café Louvre, where the correspondents from various countries gathered; to Metternich's Ballhausplatz, where we saw the Nazis raise the swastika flag on the balcony; to the telegraph office, where Hague filed installments of his story.

It was a wild time, and the catastrophe poured in like the raging waters of a broken dam. On Saturday, German troops crossed all the frontiers. There was a tremendous Nazi celebration throughout Austria. Swastika flags fluttered from all the public buildings.

In Berlin, the Fuehrer announced he would be happy to enter his native land. He took off by plane at once and, the moment he touched Austrian soil, hurled himself into the carefully prepared triumphal tour. Strange how this monster had grown. First in time. A voice among many voices raving in that spuming babel twenty years ago. This man was not real, wise people said. He was a clown, a lunatic proclaiming his own destruction tomorrow, or at the very latest the day after tomorrow. Then the monster loomed larger and larger in time. The years inflated it beyond belief. At last it loomed up on the heights, commanding a great realm, whipping a great people to its knees. The foreign diplomats fawned; the writers probed the mystery of this impossible success which yet was palpably there. The crowds roared in ecstasy. Europe offered bribes to placate the monster's greed. And now the monster was growing in space. Its armed automatons were pouring across our frontiers; its tanks were rolling pitilessly across the earth of our vanished republic; its airplanes were droning across the blue heavens of our last spring.

At Linz, the Fuehrer addressed the people whom he had just robbed of their liberty. At last he had achieved the goal for which he had struggled for so many years, Sieg Heil! After that oration, he started out for Vienna surrounded by all the Wagnerian melodrama, mechanical splendor and ruthless power typical of the realm he had founded on lies and blood. There was no resistance. The workers remained quiet. Complete order prevailed everywhere in the face of the enormous armed might which swept over the land. And at this moment the Berlin papers recorded the march of history with their customary accuracy: **VIOLENT RED DISORDERS IN VIENNA!**

With all this force and fraud, Vienna was now truly a Nazi city.

At night, Hague and I dined at the Bristol and he tried to cheer me up. It didn't go very well.

"This will wake up Europe," he said. "A child can see what's in the wind. After Austria, Czechoslovakia. After that France. Now is the time for Britain to act. London can stop this and save Europe. They are bound to see that."

The next day came, the Sunday on which we were to vote for

an independent, social, Christian, German, united Austria. Nobody moved to save Europe. The Czech government appealed to London to take action. Nothing was done. The conquerors plowed through our city in tanks, airplanes, on foot, and nobody stopped them. When they arrested Richard Schmitz, former Catholic mayor of Vienna, people began to realize they were going to make life unpleasant not only for the Jews and the Marxists.

Monday made that equally clear. It was then the Nazis closed the stock exchange to make sure no loot would escape them. And all this time the Fuehrer was slowly approaching Vienna. The monster was looming larger and larger in space, all too real, all too palpable, a nightmare come true; and along the "blue" Danube hysterical crowds cheered him in frenzied homage. The conqueror entered our city at five o'clock that afternoon. The dark, sanguinary myth was here, in person, no myth. It was too late to go down for his speech when the news reached us at the hotel, so Hague and I listened to it over the radio:

"No force on earth can stop us! This German Reich will never again fall asunder! Nobody can force it from its road!"

There was ambiguous assurance in that voice; hysterically it begged the fates to keep this black dream going; but the tanks were there, out in the street, and for the moment the wildest, most fantastic of dreams governed reality.

"Why shouldn't he get away with it?" I heard Hague saying. "Chamberlain over in London has just said nothing could have arrested what has actually happened, unless England and other countries had been prepared to use force. Okay. They'll have to use force, later on, on Hitler's terms." Then he added hopefully: "Anyway, there's one man in London who can still see straight. Winston Churchill has been yelling his head off for Britain to act now, to stop the Nazis now. Let's hope they listen to him before it's too late."

Certainly there was another sector of the globe from which the great warning and the persistent call to action came daily, but who listened in those days?

We went out into the street, and reached the Imperial Hotel just in time to see from the crowd the Fuehrer's back as he vanished into the doorway. It lived. It was real. There it was, going up the stairway so familiar to us. The mob was enormous. There were miles of uniforms. Planes zoomed overhead. Then, as the true seal that the Nazi conquest was complete, there appeared in that billowing sea of people Julius Streicher's psychotic paper—*Der Stuermer*. It announced that "the usual steps" would be taken against the Jews.

We managed to make our way out of the crowd and I left Hague

at the telegraph office, promising to meet him at our hotel. Back in my room I phoned Professor Gross.

"I'm all right," he said. "Please don't worry about me. Wait, Siegfried wants to talk to you."

Was the old man really without anxiety, or just putting on a brave front?

"What do you make of all this?" Siegfried's voice said over the phone. It was surprisingly steady.

"It looks pretty bad," I said. "There's a rumor Julius Streicher is on his way here. You know what he can do."

"Not here," he said. "In their own country they needed it for political reasons, but they won't do it here. They don't have to. I'm carrying on as usual."

Siegfried always had a great gift for closing his eyes to things of this kind.

"How about dinner Saturday night?" he said.

"All right. Meet me at that little bar off the Kaertnerstrasse. It's quiet and we can really talk."

"Fine," he said, "that's a date. I like that place."

The café was one of his favorite haunts. I had suggested it for that very reason. The café owner was very fond of Siegfried, and things would be easier in a friendly atmosphere.

Afterward, I phoned Uncle Peter. He was frankly anxious.

"After what they did to Cardinal Faulhaber in Munich," he said, "I suppose we Catholics may as well expect the worst here."

This time I assumed the role of keeping up the courage of others.

"I wouldn't worry if I were you," I said. "Things won't be so bad here. But keep away from Father Koch, anyway!"

"That charlatan!" Uncle Peter said. "I'll be lucky if he doesn't denounce me to the Gestapo."

When Hague returned to the hotel at midnight, he was full of news. The Nazis had forced the resignation of Bruno Walter, Jewish director of the Vienna Opera, and had fired Hermann Roebbling, Jewish head of the old Burgtheater. Hague offered me a cigarette and as he lit it said in a low voice:

"They've arrested the former president of your former republic, Miklas."

"What about Chancellor Schuschnigg?"

"They've arrested him, too."

I am giving you these details in a swift, confused way, doctor, because that is how they appeared at that time. Now one can sit down and make a lucid, historical survey of it all. Everything will fall into its proper place. Everything will appear logical, inevitable, just as in a well-constructed play or an old-fashioned novel; but at the time

it happened it was more like a film montage: quick, rushing flashes which set you guessing until you remembered the background against which all this ruthless action took place.

In this way the fifth day of the conquest arrived. At eleven o'clock in the morning Hague and I joined the hundreds of thousands who crowded the square in front of the Imperial Hotel to hear the Fuehrer speak. The crowd was so dense, we could not see him, but through the loudspeakers the well-known hysterical voice came to us over the heads of the mass:

"This country is German! It has understood its mission and will fulfill it! Nobody will dare to interfere with the execution of this mission . . . Germany, the new Germany! . . . The National Socialist Party! . . . Our army . . . Sieg Heil!"

The crowd broke into a roar of fanatical cheering. The band played the Deutschland Lied, then the Horst Wessel song, and the dirty spirit of the little Nazi whoremonger killed in a Berlin street brawl floated over the home of Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms. In those days, the London *Times* said of our plight: *Vae victis!* Who knows? Perhaps a little less Latin and a little more action might have been better for us and the world.

The next day, twenty-four hours after the Fuehrer's triumphant entrance into Vienna, a wave of terror was launched against the Jews. On the same day, the lightning struck in a rather unexpected spot. Major Fey, former vice-chancellor, the hero who had directed the guns which had slaughtered the people of Floridsdorf, my father included, was terrified at the entrance of the Nazis. He had conspired with them just before they murdered the little chancellor on that fateful July day four years ago, and had double-crossed them. It was said he feared retribution. Now the Nazis reported that Major Fey had shot his wife, his nineteen-year-old son, his dog and himself. Nobody believed it was really suicide.

All this time, Hague and I were together a great deal. His presence was a great comfort to me in the face of the catastrophe; his courage and kindness sustained me, and gave me the illusion that I, too, was an outsider, a visiting journalist, one might almost say, who watched these things happen to others but would soon be able to leave them behind. That illusion was destined to collapse abruptly. The moment Hitler left for Germany, Hague decided that the big Vienna story was over and that he had better trail the Fuehrer to Berlin.

The night before his departure, we dined together and drank our favorite Chablis at the Bristol, and for the first time in those turbulent days I had a chance to see Hague more clearly as a friend whose fine qualities were not obscured by the terrible drama around

us whose full meaning was not yet clear. He had grown mature. He witnessed historic events of the present as naturally as I read about historic events of the past, and in the current tumult of Europe he was far more at home than I. As we talked at the Bristol that night, and he told me of his recent experiences in Berlin, Paris and London, I realized the old romantic reverence with which he used to look upon our continent in those far-off days of "exile" when we had been students at the Sorbonne was entirely gone, leaving no trace behind it. He was completely cynical about the cynicism of our politicians, and no longer fell into the error of our youth which made us see Europe's struggle for power through the roseate haze of its ancient culture. He saw no resemblance now between Pierre Laval and Victor Hugo, Joseph Goebbels and Immanuel Kant, Neville Chamberlain and John Milton. He was very anxious for his countrymen to understand the stark conflicts and rapacities of the real Europe, and was all for a new Declaration of Independence in which America would proclaim itself spiritually of age and wholly free of the womb that gave it birth.

"Paul," he said, "why don't you professors who spend your lives explaining the French Revolution pay a little more attention to our American Revolution? We created a nation and no heads rolled on the scaffold."

"Heads do not roll in a war of national liberation," I said. "They roll in a social revolution or counterrevolution. You had to kill two million men in a civil war before you could settle the question of slavery and union."

"You miss the point, my dear fellow! Shortly after our War of Independence, Aaron Burr conspired to seize Louisiana and set up an empire. He was arrested. They had the goods on him, and afterward his guilt was proved beyond the least shadow of doubt. But at the time of his trial there was not enough legal proof to convict him, so they let him go. Do you know why? They said it was better to let one guilty man go than to endanger the principle of fair trial. That principle is one of the foundations of our liberty. It was more important to the Founding Fathers than punishing a traitor without sufficient evidence. They managed to spike Aaron Burr's guns without an execution. And there's something else, too. We have plenty of abuses in our country. The Prohibition Era is something I'll never be able to make you believe. But you know about the Shame of the Cities, the corruption, the boodle, the graft, the shooting of strikers. And lynching. We have societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals, it's a legal offense to kick a dog or beat a horse brutally; but we can't get Congress to declare it a crime to hang or burn a fellow American because his skin is black! Then we've had

the Sacco-Vanzetti affair, which is nothing to brag about, and they threw Gene Debs in jail and a lot of other pretty things like that. But compare America with Europe. Why, we're a paradise! Back home, anybody can speak his mind freely. The most burning issues are settled not on the scaffold or in the concentration camp, but in the newspapers, the courts, the legislatures, the ballot box. In this way, injustice can be minimized and even rectified. Can you imagine a man like Tom Mooney getting a hearing after a Nazi frame-up? What's happened to Thaelmann? We don't know. But the world is still agitated about Tom Mooney, and by God! he'll be freed yet! Think of that, my dear fellow."

"I have thought of it," I said. "And I've thought of a lot of other things, too. If I had my life to live over again, I'd like to be an American today anywhere in the Western hemisphere. I'd like to be a Russian ten years old; or a Chinese aged five. And I wouldn't mind being born in India on the day it achieves full, unequivocal independence. Those are the lands of the future. Great things will happen there in the coming years, things deeply creative and fruitful for the whole world. But I happen to be a West European and please don't ask me to be sorry for that. I am not one bit sorry. After this nightmare is over, we'll do great things yet. The immense reservoir of our spirit is by no means exhausted. I'm betting on a great European future."

"So am I," said Hague. He lifted his wineglass. "Here's to it."

After we set our glasses down, I said:

"You've been watching the Continent for a long time. How do you account for the new Caesars?"

It was then that Hague expanded those views on the chaos of our times which I always found surprising in him but which I am sure will please you, doctor. Why I was surprised, I can't say. I had lived all my life in Vienna and as a boy had even seen the great Freud at my house in those remote days when my father was still a theater critic; yet it had never occurred to me to measure contemporary events by the yardstick of psychoanalysis. Perhaps the surprising thing was that this should have occurred to an American mind as tough as Hague's. As a rule he had a firm grasp on the external side of life, and reported events in geopolitical terms. At this moment, however, he took a different tack. The world, he said, was diseased. The chaos and suffering of the past two decades had made millions sick, and this sickness compelled them to adore vice and loathe virtue, to hate truth and destroy beauty, to follow hysterically the mirage of a spurious heroism which was bound to bring them war and death. This sickness also impelled the prospective victims of evil to seek a wholly fantastic peace through blindness or bribery.

"People always have the government they deserve," Hague said. "Because Europe is sick, its rulers are sick. The heights of history are now commanded by lunatics. Your Caesars are men blind and deaf to their environment. They live in that utter darkness which the mad soul alone can fashion. Their hearts have turned to granite. They can no longer feel anything. And others rule millions out of the exalted fantasy of their megalomania. They can't live at all unless they are potentates imposing their will on everybody else by force and fraud. And don't forget another widespread disease of the soul—that depraved form of love which finds satisfaction in orgies of brutality."

"Why do the people submit to all this?" I said. "Surely the sane would refuse to be governed by the mad."

"Who said the people are sane today?" Hague countered. "They, too, have been made sick by the prevailing chaos. But they suffer from the opposite sickness. Their joy lies in a perverse docility. They grovel in ecstatic orgies of submission; they lie in exalted abjectness under the boots of Caesar as he crushes their bodies and minds."

I said it was a great comfort to know that the next ten years of my life would be spent in a madhouse. Hague laughed at that and admitted he had deliberately exaggerated his thesis, but that there was a lot of truth in it just the same.

Then he urged me to keep in touch with him, if possible, and to let him know if I needed any help in case anything happened to me.

"Why should anything happen to me?" I said. "I've kept out of politics all my life."

"There you are," Hague said. "You have been too sane, and in these times sanity is the greatest of all crimes."

He looked at me thoughtfully for a moment and added: "You've always wanted to visit America. Why don't you come now?"

"Not now," I said.

"If you wait it may be too late."

"No, I must stay here for the sake of those I can help."

"You can't help anybody now," Hague said. "You'd better apply for a visa right away. It will take time to go through, and the sooner you apply the better."

"I'll apply to please you," I said, "but I've got to stay here."

The next day I went down with Hague to the American consulate and filed application for a visa and promptly forgot about it. My fate was in Europe.

After Hague left Vienna, I felt lost in the welter of events. I tried to forget a world in which I could do nothing, and returned to my book on human freedom and to the Eusebian manuscript. You

could escape many anxieties for the time being trying to decipher what the fourth century saint intended by the fragment: MEN . . . CAPACITY . . . VALUE

But the radio was always there, and across the air waves I heard that in Moscow Maxim Litvinov was once more urging all powers except Germany, Italy and Japan to discuss joint means for checking further aggression. As usual, the appeal reached a world which had become totally deaf to things like that.

In Vienna, however, the Nazis were very busy and very efficient. It took them no more than a week to incorporate the Austrian army into the Reichswehr, to seize the banks, to Nazify the law, and to swoop down on the Jews in full force. So-called Aryans were not spared either. Anyone who did not fully submit to the new masters felt the force of their fury.

The Saturday on which I was to meet Siegfried at the little café off the Kaertnerstrasse opened with a tragedy at the university where I taught. I did not witness it myself and heard about it only later that afternoon. It happened while I was lecturing a class on Rousseau's doctrines of equality. At that moment, in another building on the campus, the authorities called in Professor Aaron Gross and fired him. Just like that. They fired him after forty years of service without explanation or apology. But to make sure that the old man did not miss any of the fine points, the provost who dismissed him deliberately spread out across the center of his desk, where a blind man could see it, the latest issue of Julius Streicher's *Der Stuermer*.

I was very depressed by the news, and as soon as I had heard it phoned the old man. His voice came across the wire dignified and strong, as if he had fortified his spirit against this very thing a thousand years ago, and once more he urged me please not to worry about him. He switched the subject as soon as he could, and do you know what was really on his mind? The loss of Austria's independence.

When I went to keep my date with Siegfried that evening, I was in low spirits. He was sitting at a little table, and smiled wanly as I entered.

"Just in time," he said. "You'll save me from dying of thirst, if your heart's in the right place today. My old friend the café owner refuses to serve me because of my race. He's a decent chap. He apologized and said those were orders and he couldn't help it. This is the last time I can come here. So let me buy you a drink, but you'll have to order it."

"The drinks are on me," I said and ordered some Napoleon brandy. After the waiter left, I went on: "I can't tell you how badly I feel about your father. It's a crime."

"He told me how kind you were to him the day they beat him," Siegfried said. "I want to thank you for everything."

"How is the old man feeling?"

"He's all right now. But he had a rather tough night of it. I came home about ten and found him lying in bed. They had beaten him up pretty badly. At first I was afraid of concussion. Fortunately there wasn't any. He had some fever, but at midnight, when I came to check it, his temperature was nearly normal. The lights were on in his room, and he was reading peacefully. We talked for a long time, and there were many things which caused him great anxiety. For one thing, he was worried about you."

"About me?"

"He was afraid you might misunderstand his reference to St. Ambrose."

"I'm not likely to take offense on theological grounds."

"No, no; it was apparently something else. The cleavage is there regardless of theology."

"Please tell your father not to worry," I said. "Tell him I love and esteem him in every way, and I think I know what he meant."

"I'll do that," said Siegfried. "It was quite a night. The old man became anxious about the general situation—pogroms in Poland, concentration camps in Germany, and the pleasant things right here in Vienna. You have probably paid little attention to the problem, but it's been a painful business for some time. My father, being a historian, went back to the sixteenth century and raked up all the old persecutions. But even without that kind of survey, the past few years have been bad enough. It's true Hitler picked up the virus right here in Vienna. It's a pretty little poison flower that has been cultivated for a long time right here on these glorious boulevards. Two years ago one of our cabinet ministers published a projected law which he had worked out a decade and a half earlier with Chancellor Seipel. Have you ever read it?"

"I missed that one," I said.

Siegfried was flushed and excited, and I was becoming troubled by the vibrant anxiety which agitated his sensitive face.

"My father read it at the time and hasn't forgotten it," he said. "His patriotic feelings for our country are very deep, as you know, and he was upset by the idea of setting up a separate Jewish nation right in the midst of Austria—a constitutional ghetto, so to speak."

"But they never passed such a law."

"No, they didn't. The government rejected the project, and do you know why? They said it failed to take the race principle into consideration. Well, I sat in my father's room late into the night and listened to the old man pour out his heart about everything. He

wished he could go to America, or even Palestine, in spite of everything; but it's too late now. So he lay back on his pillow and uttered the complaint of the centuries. You'll laugh at this—but no, you won't; in that respect you're just as bad as he is. He said that since the Middle Ages the church, despite its dogmatic intolerance, has always preached toleration toward the Jews. You should have heard the old man's quotations to that effect from Bernard of Clairvaux, Pope Innocent the Third, Pope Gregory the Ninth, Clement the Sixth, Martin the Fifth, Pious the Fourth and other Holy Fathers. But what is the church doing in Germany today against racial persecution? Nothing. In his Advent sermons, Cardinal Faulhaber of Munich spoke of the 'enmity of our times toward the Jews,' but not by a single, solitary word did he condemn it. All he was worried about was that this enmity should not be extended to the Old Testament, which is indispensable to the theological structure of his church. And did the church protest officially against the barbaric Nuremberg laws? They did not. Yet, in spite of the Nazi persecution of Catholics in Germany, Cardinal Faulhaber signed the pastoral letter denouncing the danger from Bolshevik Russia and Loyalist Spain, and expressing the hope that 'our Fuehrer may with God's help succeed in saving Europe, with the faithful support of the whole nation.' And last year, when the Pope declared war against the doctrine of 'blood and soil,' he still left the Jews in the lurch.

"Well, the old man carried on quite a bit about all this, and he didn't spare the Protestants either. I don't know just what he was referring to, but he insisted that Martin Luther's frightful treachery against the Jews has left a deep mark on Protestant Europe. Then, after this Biblical lament was over, he suddenly became hopeful. He insisted it was inevitable that the democracies of the world should wipe out the Nazi evil thoroughly and forever. Then, he said, mankind would start with a clean slate, and something decent might come out of it for all men everywhere. He said it is time for all mankind to settle accounts with the past, to erase the whole record of agony and blood and begin a really human life at last. This idea excited him so much I had to give him a sedative and he finally fell asleep. For the next three weeks he felt fine. This morning he went to his classes at the university in a very cheerful mood. The moment he arrived, he was called into the provost's office, and they fired him."

"Awful, awful," I said. "Will your family be able to manage on your salary from the hospital?"

"What salary? Oh, of course! Well, it would not be easy, but we could manage—if I had a salary."

"What are you talking about?"

"They sacked me late this afternoon."

"But why? How do they expect you to live? What do they expect you to do?"

"They're not especially anxious for me to live," he said. "And they expect me to treat only Jewish patients. Unfortunately, they have the power to make sure that their expectations are not disappointed."

"Isn't there something we can do about this? Let's phone Uncle Peter. He has some influence."

"He *had* some influence," Siegfried corrected. "I've already phoned him. He was very kind. But his own position is not too good at the moment."

"What about Helga? She has tremendous connections."

"Ah, Helga," he said smiling. "Dear Helga. Let's eat first, and I'll tell you about her afterward. I'd like to enjoy my last supper here."

All through supper he avoided all mention of Helga. The brandy made him forget his troubles for the moment and he talked about trifles. Then he suddenly turned to me and said ironically:

"You teach history. Tell me: why can't men foresee their destiny? Why can't they learn from their long experience upon this earth? Why can't they destroy evil before it's too late?"

"Senseless questions," I said. "You know perfectly well nobody can answer them."

He laughed in a cryptic, painful way, and his eyes became a little bloodshot. All at once he looked pale and ill.

"Nobody can answer them!" he echoed reproachfully. "But your dear, kind father was very fond of answering them. Do you remember those good old days of the great emancipation of all by all? What a glorious morning of the world *that* was. The dawn of the Golden Age, no less. Oh, what a wonderful future your father and his friends spread out before us—on the map at least. Well, the future is here. Where are the marching feet of the promised liberators? How is it we hear the dread beat of the conqueror's boots instead? And tell me, please, who opened the gates to him?" He stopped suddenly, passed his hand over his eyes and murmured, "Excuse me. I'm not feeling well. I have a headache."

"We're young," I said. "This horror can last only a few years. Then you can start life over again."

"You think so?"

"Yes, it can't be otherwise. The monsters are doomed to destroy themselves in the end."

"Yes, yes, it may really come to that." He knitted his brows. "But even then—doesn't everything depend on what comes afterward?"

Look at our situation even before Hitler. Do you know? It was only this week, no, this very afternoon, that everything suddenly became clear to me. I used to quarrel with my father about these things, and he never could make me see them straight. But where my father failed, Hitler has succeeded. He has made me aware of the very thing I have tried for years to forget—that I am a Jew. And he reminds me of it in the most frightful way, with the most degrading humiliation and shame. Can anybody ever forget or forgive degradation like this? But the joke is on me! the degradation has always been there, and I refused to face it. They have been humiliating us for a long time.”

He looked very ill now, and was saying these things in an extreme form out of the fever which flushed his lean face red.

“You have known me for years,” he went on tensely, “and what do you really know about me? Can you possibly have any conception how I felt when Helga permitted me to love her for a whole year? Don’t smile. I say ‘permitted’ because that’s just the way it was. I see it now. Oh, you can never understand that! You loved her, too, once; but it was different with you. She was a woman, and you were a man. It was that way with us, too. But there was another element, one which haunted me day and night. Do you know what you have forced us to do by twenty centuries of persecution? You have forced us to do what no man wants to do, to split our souls in two, to live as two men in one body. You have forced us to see the world not only as citizens, as men, as human beings, but also as something unique, something which prejudice, misunderstanding and intolerance keep alive—as Jews. What folly for everybody concerned, what fantastic madness! When I first took Helga in my arms, I was the happiest man on earth. But that happiness had a special twist to it. I was happy not only because she let me love her; but also because it was an act of emancipation. The gates of the ghetto had fallen at last—and to the trumpets of love! The wonderful light of equality which I had never seen in all its splendor poured in with a great rush. I was a free man; I was accepted; I was like everyone else! Oh, there were bitter days and bitter nights with Helga. She is not a good woman. Though her ancestors have been Christians for fifteen centuries, not one iota of the Sermon on the Mount has ever penetrated her turbulent, ambitious spirit. It was I who became Christian. I suffered at her hands untold agonies and forgave her; I listened to her insults and was glad to bear them in the same room with *her*—a gentile and a countess. Even when Helga and I broke off, I did not realize the full truth. I fancied it was something that could happen that way to anybody, the way you broke with her.”

Siegfried was talking very rapidly and was becoming somewhat incoherent, but I did not know how to stop him.

"In the great, wide world it was the same," he went on. "I tried to divest myself wholly, unequivocally of the racial past. But, by heaven, they won't let you do it no matter how you try! You couldn't even be a reactionary in Austria. The Heimwehr closed its doors to Jews, and a few years ago the monarchists asked us to refrain from 'burdening' their cause with our active support. And would you like to hear something really fantastic? At one time I felt that the Protestants and the Jews had the most in common in their outlook on life. So I tried to become a Lutheran. But the Lutheran church in Vienna had already closed its doors to the Jews. Do you wonder about people like Otto Bauer and Julius Deutsch and Léon Blum? Maybe that was the path I should have chosen, but it was too late. That night, long ago, when we were schoolboys and visited Helga's house for the first time—that night settled it. I imagined freedom lay in that direction. I wanted everything else to remain as it was. The world was good enough for me—on one condition: that it accept me as an equal, that they let me escape my past and become one of them, to share life fully in communion with them. Well, you see how everything has turned out," he ended lamely.

"Hadn't we better go home?" I suggested. "You look a little tired."

"In a moment. First let me tell you what I thought this afternoon, after they fired me. I started to walk toward this café and there came to my mind this queer fantasy. As a rule, I never indulge in fantasies. That's *your* weakness. I'm all for reason, logic and fact. But this time it came over me and I could not stop it. Suppose my last hour had come. Suppose the Angel Gabriel came to me. Oh, yes, it was the Angel Gabriel! I had not thought of him once since I was a very little boy, but the crisis threw me back to my childhood and I suddenly thought of the Angel Gabriel. All right. Suppose this angel appeared to me and said: 'You have only one hour more on this earth, and in that hour you may pour out your heart before me as your heavenly witness.'"

"What a silly idea," I said impatiently. "No man gets that kind of chance. To pour out your heart! Come on, let's get home."

"It was a fantasy," he insisted. "Of course it could never happen, but that is just what I imagined as I walked here to meet you. I imagined the Angel Gabriel came to me and gave me a last chance to speak my heart freely in my last hour on earth."

"All right," I said, signaling the waiter to bring our check. "And what did you say to the Angel Gabriel?"

"That's just it!" Siegfried exclaimed in great excitement. "At first I could not think of anything. I was so bitter I had absolutely nothing to say. My heart was frozen, and I said to myself: that is the

punishment for all these years of self-deception. Then, suddenly, words came rushing through my brain, but they were not my own words. I remembered a passage I had once read, long, long before anybody ever heard of Hitler! The passage was by a famous novelist who used to be described as 'a German of Jewish origin.' Have you ever heard of Jacob Wassermann?"

"Yes. What passage are you talking about?"

"Here it is: Vain to adjure the nation of poets and thinkers in the name of its poets and thinkers. Every prejudice one thinks disposed of breeds a thousand others, as carrion breeds maggots. Vain to present the right cheek after the left has been struck. It does not move them to the slightest thoughtfulness; it never touches or disarms them: they strike the right cheek, too. Vain to interject words of reason into their crazy shrieking. They say: he dares to open his mouth? gag him! Vain to act in exemplary fashion. They say: we know nothing, we have seen nothing, we have heard nothing. Vain to seek obscurity. They say: the coward! he is creeping into hiding, driven by his evil conscience. Vain to go among them and offer one's hand. They say: why does he take such liberties, with his Jewish obtrusiveness? Vain to keep faith with them, as comrade-in-arms or fellow-citizen. They say: he is Proteus, he can assume any shape or form. Vain to help them strip off the chains of slavery. They say: No doubt he found it profitable. Vain to counteract the poison. They grow fresh venom. Vain to live for them and die for them. They say: he is a Jew. . . . That is what Jacob Wassermann wrote seventeen years ago, before the Nazis came into existence. He wrote it about Berlin. But do you know what? Every word of it is just as true of Vienna!"

"You are wrought up," I said. "You take your unjust dismissal and the unjust dismissal of your father very hard, and I can't blame you. But you must not forget the positive sides of the thing. This is not your last hour on earth nor the last hour of history. After this nightmare, you'll see wonderful things. You must live and fight for the future."

I felt rather embarrassed by this exhortation, but it came out of me with such conviction that it had the desired effect. Siegfried smiled broadly and his eyes became clear again.

"Of course I'll live and fight for the future!" he exclaimed.

I took him home in a cab. At the doorway of his house I said:

"What about seeing Helga? I'm sure a word from her will get you that job at the hospital again."

"Oh, Helga," he said vaguely. "I went to see her about it. She refused to receive me."

"What do you mean, refused? She was probably out and the maid said so."

Siegfried passed his hand over his eyes again, like a man slowly going blind.

"No, no," he said. "It wasn't that way at all. I stood in the corridor of her house and distinctly heard her say to the maid: 'Tell that Jew not to come here any more.'"

I tried to assure him the situation was not hopeless and promised to do everything within my power to help him. When we said good night, he was somewhat more cheerful. I walked to my hotel room and that night I stayed up rather late working on my book.

In the morning Professor Gross phoned me. With that overwhelming calm he had learned to cultivate, he told me slowly about Siegfried.

My friend had come home and gone to bed. When he did not appear at breakfast, they looked into his room. They found him fully dressed, sprawling across the bed. He left no note of any kind. He had used a straight, old-fashioned razor.

Afterward there were many such episodes in the Jewish districts. At the same time, the conquerors were arresting hundreds of so-called Aryans who had been anxious to fight for an independent, social, Christian, German, united Austria.

2

*He arrests him on it;
And follows close the rigour of the statutes,
To make him an example.*

—Measure for Measure.

THE SPRING DRAGGED on as if nothing had changed, and the skies smiled above the whips and boots of the invaders. The arrests continued daily. People were shipped off to concentration camps, and men like Professor Gross were forced to scrub the gutters on their hands and knees under the cynical laughter of Austria's liberators. Dr. Sigmund Freud was hounded out of the country at eighty. Don't ask me why, doctor. Perhaps the great novelist said it all when he said: "it's just their defenselessness that tempts the tormentor."

One night I was on my way home from dinner at the Webers'. Otto had tried to encourage me. He said that after a while right was bound to prevail over wrong; and, dangling the lovely little Ingrid on his knees, he insisted that she would grow up to see a free world once more. He recalled some wonderful sayings of my father, and maintained that the old man had been right in essence. Time, time, he said, echoing the very idea which once filled my heart with hope, but which now, in the hour of fiery trial, seemed to abandon me. Emma Weber supported her husband's arguments. Both of them had a great deal of faith in the destiny of their class as the liberator of mankind, and were absolutely certain that in the nick of time the great people which had established socialism over one-sixth of the earth would come to the rescue of us all. It was useless. I was no longer capable of believing anything, and wished with all my heart that Peggy could be at my side now, for love itself is faith.

Engrossed in these thoughts, I heard my name called. I stopped and looked up, and there, under the awning of an open-air café, saw Helga at a round table with some people.

"Paul!" she was saying. "I haven't seen you for ages! Do join us."

I started toward her, and at this moment noticed her companions. There were two other women whom I had never seen before, and there were three tall, black-uniformed Nazi officers whose insignia

indicated high rank. One of these was holding Helga's hand in his, and smirking into her handsome face.

Without a word, I turned on my heel and walked away rapidly. There was nothing to say. Lady Macbeth of Vienna could go to hell her own way.

At the hotel, my room was quiet and serene, as if it were a thousand miles away from the great prison house which was once a kind of socialist city. It was good to be back here, alone with my books, manuscripts and thoughts. Here was one realm the Nazis could not invade; one could still think in silence about the great, wide world and its fate.

I took out my book *Of Human Freedom* from the center drawer of my desk and glanced through the last sections I had written. Eusebius—that unknown saint whose manuscript I was still trying to decipher—had concentrated my attention on the fourth century. Here was that other story about St. Ambrose and the Emperor Theodosius. I had written it down tentatively. How right Heine was! "Christianity, and this is its greatest merit, has occasionally calmed the brutal German lust for battle." If wholly true, this second story about St. Ambrose was extremely illuminating.

The governor of Illyria imprisons a charioteer of Thessalonica who has been accused by his cupbearer of a perverse sexual assault. Christianity is four hundred years old, and good citizens already loathe that kind of thing. But the people of Thessalonica are passionately fond of the circus. They demand the liberation of their favorite charioteer. The governor refuses. Thereupon the people rise in tumult, murder the governor and other high officials, and drag their mutilated bodies through the streets of the city.

When the news reaches the Emperor Theodosius, he is inflamed with rage at the crime committed in the very city in which he has been baptized. This is not only murder; it's rebellion! And at the very moment when the Emperor is considering what to do with the rebels, St. Ambrose is in Milan presiding over an assembly of bishops trying to settle problems of church government.

I'll tell you the rest of the story in a minute, doctor, but perhaps I had better tell you first how I came to set it down in my book on human freedom. As I said, I had written it tentatively, indeed quite hastily, without giving the matter much thought, that is, conscious thought; but the idea had been there for a long time, and no doubt the reference which Professor Gross had made to St. Ambrose first started the whole thing in my mind. But I believe that the greatest stimulus came from the Eusebian manuscript; for it was that which started me off thinking afresh about the role of Christianity in the great saga of the West.

You can understand how it was, doctor. My story of man's struggle toward democracy had already briefly sketched the rise of man from the amoeba to Amos, and had indicated the atrocities and advances of four thousand years of recorded history from the days when the Assyrians flayed their war prisoners alive and nailed their skins to the walls of their fortresses and Hammurabi issued his enlightened code, to the days when Pontius Pilate was procurator of Judaea and the multitudes heard the Sermon on the Mount. And now the amoeba who had grown into a two-legged hunter, a cannibal, a warrior; a slave in the galleys, the fields, the mines; a priest, a poet, a philosopher, a Caesar; this creature which for thousands of years had shed blood copiously in triumph and torrents of tears in despair was now faced with the most tremendous idea that had yet filled the earth with light; that all men are equal in the sight of God and love is the absolute condition of the resurrection and the life. Equality and love and the essential unity of mankind the world over, announced with such felicity and power by St. Paul: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus," and that great luminous phrase which transcends the deadly barriers of race: "And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth."

The most sublime things in Western literature have been written about that idea, and people have slit each other's throats and burned each other at the stake to settle the real meaning of the gospel of love, and it would be stupid and unpardonable presumption on my part to do more than indicate its most obvious outlines. But how could I make the readers of my book see the thing in practice? How could I give living shape to the old problem which in the folly of my youth I used to call "the square and the circle"? What single episode could I select which would show the effect of the gospel of mercy and justice upon the amoeba which became first a cannibal, then a warrior seething with wrath and vengeance? How could I make vivid the power of contrition and forgiveness which the new faith set up like a mighty, luminous dam against the furious seas of blood and tears raging across the world? And how could I make real the most terrible chastisement which the church had at its disposal—the power to cast the sinner out of the fold, to exile him into the greatest loneliness known to man, leaving him utterly abandoned, utterly hopeless in the outer darkness whose borders led to infinity? And how could I make anyone today believe that this awful power affected the greatest as well as the humblest? It was at this moment that the second story about St. Ambrose and the Emperor Theodosius leaped to my mind, and I set it down hastily in my notebook.

Ambrose, then, is presiding over the synod of bishops when news reaches him of the murders in Thessalonica and the emperor's rage. Ambrose knows his emperor only too well; he knows how disturbance of the public peace and insolence against the established power can infuriate him. So he writes the emperor imploring clemency; he urges that in punishing the rioters the authorities should not confound the innocent with the guilty. The emperor promises to act with moderation. But his ministers goad him into the sternest measures; they insist the rebellion is so arrogant and pernicious that vengeance must be appropriately severe; the emperor must set an example that will never be forgotten; he must show that his officials cannot be murdered with impunity; otherwise his prestige will suffer. Thereupon Theodosius sends avengers of the blood to Thessalonica to massacre the people indiscriminately.

At once, the emperor regrets his edict. He dispatches messengers to recall it. Too late; the die is cast. There is a great race at the circus in Thessalonica, and thousands have gathered to watch it. Suddenly, the gates of the circus are closed and the emperor's troops march in with drawn swords.

"The scene which ensued," a famous church historian tells us, "was one of the most horrible recorded in history. The crowd in the circus were massacred, alike the guilty and the innocent, alike citizens and strangers. For three hours of indescribable horror the work of hell went on. At the lowest computation, seven thousand fell."

The empire is horrified by the news of the bloodbath. What is this? Are we living again in the days of Nero and Caligula? St. Ambrose is overwhelmed with anguish and shame. But the situation requires tact. The great bishop of Milan pretends he is ill, and from his sister's house in Rome writes a confidential letter to Emperor Theodosius urging him to repent and delicately hinting at exclusion from the ranks of the faithful:

"I persuade, I entreat, I exhort, I admonish because it is a grief to me that the perishing of so many of the innocent is no grief to you. I dare not offer the sacrifice if you are to be present. I would gladly have left you to the workings of your own heart, but I dare not either keep silence or make light of your offense. So bloody a scene as that at Thessalonica is unheard of in the world's history."

Note this carefully, doctor. Recorded history is at this moment already four thousand years old, and all the books in the world could not list fully the atrocities which have been committed by man against man in that time; but memory is short, and perhaps the gospel of love has already softened the heart of the amoeba who has been so long a barbarian, and the good St. Ambrose believes that the particular atrocity which agitates his time has no precedent in the annals of man. And now he goes on to exhort the emperor:

"I had warned and entreated you against it; you yourself recognized its atrocity; you endeavored to recall your decree. And now I call on you to repent! You can only atone for your sins by tears, by penitence, by humbling your soul before God. You are a man, and as you have sinned as a man you must so repent. Ah, how must I grieve that you, who were an example of special piety, you who were unwilling that one innocent person should suffer, should not repent that so many of the innocent have been slaughtered! Brave in battle, praiseworthy in all things else, yet goodness was the crown of all your conduct. The evil spirit envied you the noblest of your blessings. Overcome him while yet you may! I love you; I esteem you from my heart; I pray for you. If you believe it, accept what I say. If you believe it not, pardon me for preferring God to you."

Then Ambrose returns to Milan; and, as he is conducting the divine service in church, lo and behold! the Emperor Theodosius presents himself as usual at the cypress-wood gate of the basilica of what is today called the church of San Ambroggio Maggiore. Firmly yet kindly, saint confronts emperor and appeals to him as follows:

"It seems, O Augustus, that you have not repented of the monstrosity of your murder. Your imperial power has darkened your understanding. It stands between you and the recognition of your sin. Do not let the glory of your purple blind your eyes to the weakness of the mortal body which covers it. You have sinned against your fellow men, and One is Lord and King of us all. How can you uplift in prayer the hands which yet drip with innocent blood? Depart! add not to sin. Find in repentance the means of mercy which can restore you to health of soul."

"King David sinned," the emperor replies, "yet David was forgiven."

"You have imitated him in his sin," says Ambrose. "Imitate him also in his repentance."

Humbly the emperor agrees that as he had sinned before the world, so he must repent before the world. For eight months he is a penitent who may not present himself at divine service. His agony is very great. Exiled from the church, he feels he has been exiled from the kingdom of heaven. When Christmas arrives, he can bear it no longer and tries to enter the basilica where Ambrose is about to preach. But the bishop is firm; the time of penance is not yet over.

Theodosius feels his exclusion acutely. One day an imperial official finds the emperor weeping bitterly. The official can hardly conceal his smile.

"You smile because you do not feel my misery," the emperor tells him. "The church of God is open to slaves and beggars; to me it is closed, and with it the gates of heaven."

After the period of penance is completed, St. Ambrose tells the

emperor what he must do. First he must revive the old Roman law which says that thirty days must elapse between judgment and punishment. This will prevent hasty massacres like that of Thessalonica. Then the emperor must take his place openly in the church among the penitents.

Behold the emperor, then, in the basilica with all the insignia of his great office laid aside. He lies prostrate on the ground, weeping with all his heart for the slaughter of the innocents into which he had been misled by his own rage and the treacherous advice of his ministers.

"My soul cleaveth to the dust!" he cries aloud. "O God, quicken thou me according to thy Word!"

Thus did the Emperor Theodosius crave forgiveness for his sin in public. Emperor and saint, the church historians tell us, were friends who honored and loved each other; and in Ambrose the mighty Caesar recognized the ideal of all that was best and noblest in himself. He never forgot the massacre of Thessalonica and never thought of it without remorse.

That was how I had set the story down roughly in my notebook. At some future time I would rewrite it and try to make it clearer. Now I put my notebook on human freedom back in the center drawer of my desk, lit a cigarette and leaned back in my chair. The clock ticked peacefully in the silence of the night wherein reverie has its truest being.

Perhaps it was all wrong, though. Don't let anyone tell you there is no progress. Can you imagine a modern Caesar foolishly weeping tears of repentance in public because he had slaughtered a few innocent people?

There was a knock on my door. I opened it cautiously. Four SS men in black uniforms, heavily armed, stood in the hallway. Their leader, a young officer in his late twenties, looked sternly at me. I was about to speak; I wanted to say: "Very well, I'll come." Instead I decided to wait. Why precipitate events?

The SS officer placed his black brief case on a chair, glanced around the room quickly, then turned to me.

"Professor Schuman?" he rapped out.

"Yes."

"You are a member of the League for the Rights of Man." This was not a question; it was a statement. He knew the fact and there was going to be no discussion about it. "That's a stinking democratic organization which fought our Fuehrer!"

The officer turned to the armed troopers in the hallway.

"Search the room!" he ordered.

The troopers came in, closing the door behind them. They made

straight for the bookcases and ransacked them thoroughly, throwing the books on the floor. I was not worried. I had long ago got rid of all the obviously incriminating books in my library, particularly those which I had inherited from my father. Only conservative historical works remained in the shelves.

The young officer in black uniform was going through my desk. Except for a few harmless personal letters, it contained nothing but a few lecture notes and the material I was working on in connection with my studies. Suddenly the officer straightened up, his gray eyes hard and cold. He was holding a roll of yellow parchment in his hand. It was the Eusebian manuscript. He looked me over in silence, then unrolled the parchment and frowned at the script.

"What sort of code is this, professor?" he snapped.

"That's no code," I said. "What you are holding is a fourth century manuscript in the Umbrian dialect."

"Is it?" he said ironically. "Naturally, you wouldn't lie to us, professor." He threw his shoulders back and announced formally: "I shall be compelled to turn this code over to the higher authorities. They'll decipher that Umbrian conspiracy of yours."

Poor Eusebius! You wanted to be remembered, understood and loved by posterity; you hoped the memory of your good deeds would survive the barbarians who ransacked Rome in your day. Now you fall into the hands of their even more barbarous descendants, and these will give you anything but understanding and love. You didn't expect this, Eusebius. Neither did we, though we should have known better.

The officer rolled up the Eusebian manuscript briskly and slipped it into his black brief case. Then he turned again to my desk and began opening drawers with furious energy. Abruptly he stopped, leaned over the center drawer and came up with my notebook. The officer turned to the troopers who were still tearing through my library.

"That will do!" he barked. "I think we have what we want here."

He faced me, grinning, and began to turn the pages of my notebook.

"*Of Human Freedom*," he read with slow irony. "A most incriminating title, professor. You realize that, don't you? Unfortunately, I haven't the time to look through your profound reflections on that subject. No matter. There isn't going to be any freedom, so why bother reading about it, eh, professor?"

He laughed grimly and tucked the notebook into his brief case.

"I'll take this along for reference," he said, "and I think I'd better take you along for reference, too."

I stood still, chained to the floor by uncertainty.

"You heard what I said, professor!" the officer shouted. "Come along now!"

I looked around my study. The drawers of my desk were open, the floor was littered with papers and books. Would I ever see this place again? There stood the photographs of my parents and Peggy. They were fortunate. They had died before this came.

"May I take my overcoat?" I asked.

"Go ahead," the officer said.

I walked to the clothes closet and slowly took out my old spring overcoat. What would happen to my manuscript on human freedom? to Eusebius? to my books? It no longer mattered. I had read my books so many times, they were inside me now; they would be there as long as I lived.

Slipping my arms into the coat, I looked around my room for the last time. There was my favorite picture—Gruenewald's Crucifixion from the Issenheim altarpiece. The whole agony and hope of the Reformation was in that picture: man's right to follow the dictates of his own conscience. The figure of Christ was that of a simple man, perhaps a farmer; the face was rugged, the black beard stiff, the hairy arms coarse, and all of it infinitely human.

"You're wasting time," the officer snapped.

"Sorry," I said, picking up my hat.

I followed the armed detail into the street. There I was put into a closed lorry crowded with men. The doors were then locked and the motor was started. It was dark inside the huge truck, and at first I could not see anything except the shadowy figures of men huddled together. After a while, I could make out the shape of the nearest faces. I knew none of them. I could feel the truck bouncing across the cobblestones, but had no idea where we were being taken. The place was full of cigarette smoke, and through it came the whisper of men's voices.

"I guess it's Dachau."

"No, the Columbia House in Berlin. That's what it said in a concentration camp story I read."

"Who cares?"

"Sure, who? One place is as pleasant as another."

I leaned against the wall, closed my eyes and tried to forget my surroundings. My nerves screamed with rage, but I alone could hear them. What would happen to my friends, acquaintances and enemies in Vienna? What would they do to Otto Weber, and Emma and little Ingrid? to Professor Gross? What a grand old man! Would Father Koch really denounce Uncle Peter to the Gestapo? The wild questions beat mercilessly against my tired brain, and I could not stop them. Would they arrest Teddy Hoffman? Would they employ

Ludwig Hauck in their propaganda machine? An expert on the radical movement, no less. Would Helga marry one of those monsters, or would she just "sleep around," as the neat phrase goes? What would they do to my decent colleagues at the university? How many of my students would join them out of fear, cupidity or self-deception? I would not know for a long time; perhaps I would never know. I suddenly thought of Kurt and remembered how he once spoke of his "completed life" at the moment the brown hordes engulfed his country.

Suddenly I was seized with a desire to sit in a movie house, to watch the glamorous phantoms on the screen, to forget the real world. Shots from various movies I had seen flitted through my brain: Clark Gable riding with a girl on a transcontinental bus across America; Greta Garbo as Sweden's Queen Christine, laughing in an inn, dressed as a man. And here was that beautiful countrywoman of mine, Elissa Landi, galloping on horseback through the woods.

How long this kept up, I can't remember. After a while the movie scenes refused to come; I could not evade my surroundings that way any more. But I could not stop thinking either.

What were they going to do to us? And what did all this mean for the future of the world? For thousands of years men have been torturing and killing each other. History: the record of men's crimes and follies. Always a new solution for an old evil, and always the same old evil again in some new disguise. Our civilization has been one long cruel agony, despite its marvelous achievements. To be sure, at the end of every century we cast up accounts and find the sum total profitable for an abstract thing called the Nation or Europe or Mankind. Until now, we, the living, have rejoiced over the gains we have made at the expense of the dead. But now we ourselves experience the horrors by which civilization advances. And in despair we begin to wonder whether there has ever been any real advance at all.

At this moment, surrounded by the armed emissaries of Death, I felt close to all the dead of the world. Not to those who have expired peacefully in the natural course of events, and not to my father and Peggy alone, but to all those millions who have died violently and uselessly in the eternal slaughter of the innocents. I thought of the massacres, lynchings and pogroms which have convulsed history for fifty centuries, the wars in which conquerors of aggressive and implacable will have vented their efficient cruelty upon peoples unwilling or unable to resist.

Then I became aware of my surroundings acutely. The lorry was roaring through the night, along earth and grass, clearly; and I felt the warm whispers of my fellow prisoners.

This transition from my hidden thoughts to the visual world gave me a strange sensation. I had long been accustomed to live in two realms of experience: the present reality of my own life in these times and the remembered reality of other lives in past times as recorded in the pages of history. Sometimes I had felt that the two were different things, like two remote shores spanned and united by the long bridge of time. Now that difference vanished completely. I felt more keenly than ever that the present was part of the past and the past part of the present. As in dreams and nightmares, time disappeared. Everything began to move along one vast firmament of experience.

Wasn't this one of the things I had been trying to say in my book *Of Human Freedom*? Yes, I had actually wanted to remind those men of my own time who are engaged in the struggle for liberty that they are soldiers in the oldest, most sacred of all wars. To serve posterity aright they ought to remember their ancestors.

They had seized my manuscript!

The thought of my lost book was too painful to endure. I dismissed it from my mind abruptly, but it persisted in returning. Then the pain became greater, for I began to question its whole premise. Who remembers past experience? Who profits by it? Poor Eusebius, whoever he was, had left no mark upon the world, and who knows what is going to happen to the yellow parchment by which a few scholars, of no consequence in the practical world, would learn what little there was to know about him.

No, for the majority of men history is a record of a few tremendous achievements and a great deal of horror and deprivation, the endless labor of Sisyphus rolling the rock of progress up the mountain only to have it roll down upon him again.

So why be surprised to find all history reduced to the present scene? Here it all was in a nutshell: a group of political prisoners and their guards rolling along in this lorry through this particular night toward the punishment awaiting us.

After all, I thought, my own suffering will be no more than a drop in the ocean of history which some future misanthrope, in a moment of inspired originality, will describe in the biting phrase about men's crimes and follies. Wasn't this also history—these extras and supers, these men who appear in the record not as great names but merely as statistics in round figures?

The prisoners were smoking heavily, and the acrid odor of tobacco filled the crowded lorry. Someone cleared his throat. It was stuffy inside and the silence was oppressive. Suddenly a deep voice among the prisoners began to intone in the dark:

Far and wide, O dark and dreary,
Moor and wold around us lie.

I recognized the song. From the concentration camps it had traveled all over the world wherever men and women were gathered to resist the new evil. The prisoners began to hum an accompaniment, and the bass solo rose louder in the night:

Birds are hushed, the air is weary;
Trees are twisted toward the sky.

A rifle butt knocked furiously against the floor of the truck.
"Silence, bastards!" a guard shouted.

The order choked off the singing. A heavy silence fell around us except for the droning of the motor. An old prisoner near me wiped his forehead with his sleeve. Someone in the corner coughed timidly. Who were these people? Where did they come from? Why were they here? Stupid, futile questions. For that matter, why was I here? Was the oppressor intent upon punishing even the mildest liberal gestures, a professor of Kulturgeschichte poking his nose out of the ivory academy for a breath of fresh air?

I leaned back against the wall of the lorry and closed my eyes. I seemed to be back in my classroom that very morning. How the spring sunlight poured in through the windows! It's impossible to believe we are no longer free. The students are smiling; they have always liked to hear me recite passages from the classics, and now they smile because they think there is a hidden meaning in the famous passage of Tacitus which I give them. It is the one in which the Scottish chieftain is rallying his troops against the invading legions: Vain hope to evade the Roman's clutches by obsequious submission. The whole world is now to them a prey. They have ransacked the continents, and now they must search the seas. If their foe be rich, they are ravenous for gold; if he be poor, for glory; and neither East nor West can sate an appetite unique in this, that plenty or dearth is alike to them a lure. Empire is the name they give to a policy of plunder, bloodshed and rapine; and when they have created a desert they call it "peace." Why do my students continue to smile? Is there among them an informer who will denounce my parable to the Gestapo?

I opened my eyes and peered through the gloom of the bouncing lorry over the heads of the prisoners, at the figures of the guards surrounding us. At first the guards seemed to be merely hard young men with taciturn faces. Most of them were no older than my students, and I wondered for a moment whether they were not perhaps the innocent victims of the most cruel hoax ever played upon youth.

But soon I saw in their eyes something which made me shudder. Had the oppressor combed his entire realm to find these creatures without the least semblance of thought and feeling, or had he discovered some horrible secret whereby normal young men could be transformed into the quintessence of brutality? For those guards looked down upon us not as if we were fellow men, albeit their prisoners, but rather as if we were some species of inferior insect from a remote planet. The last threads which bound them to mankind had been irretrievably destroyed.

My bones began to ache from the long journey, and I was becoming hungry. There was nothing to do but smoke my pipe, wonder and follow the shadows of uncontrolled reverie. I am at the Library, greeting Uncle Peter; he smiles kindly at me and my heart feels glad that he exists and is my uncle. Afterward I go to one of the tables, order some volumes and begin to take notes for my class in the French Revolution. Napoleon's troops are besieging a fortress defended by four thousand Mamelukes. The defenders run out of food. They offer to give up the fort provided their lives are spared. The French general directing the siege solemnly gives them that promise. Four thousand Mamelukes file out and surrender their arms. At this moment Napoleon arrives. He looks over the situation and becomes furious. What! You take these four thousand prisoners! How are we going to feed them? We are short of rations! And how are we going to guard them? We are short of men! Imbeciles! I ordered you to take *no* prisoners. Take these men out. Kill them!

The French officers try to reason with Napoleon: But, general, we have promised these men their lives. We cannot break our word. And how can we slaughter unarmed prisoners? It is dishonorable, inhuman!

Napoleon is obdurate. Four thousand unarmed men are taken out to the beach. They are shot down in cold blood. *C'est la guerre*.

What a scene! And think of it, doctor: this massacre was ordered by one of the greatest heroes of Western civilization, the epic figure of no less than two hundred thousand of our books.

But why blame Napoleon? He was by trade a butcher of men. It was his business to kill. What is really interesting about this is that historians and military experts in all countries have praised his treatment of the Mamelukes. If necessary to win a campaign, they say, it is not only right but absolutely obligatory to exterminate four thousand unarmed men, or, for that matter, four million unarmed men, and to do it by calculation, in cold blood, like the killing of so many bedbugs. Yes, college professors the world over teach their students to admire in Napoleon that cruelty toward men which they would not dare to show to dogs. That is the morality of might. I

thought in the darkness of the lorry that was taking us that night to a concentration camp. That's also liberty, equality and fraternity. That's loving your fellow men as we have been bidden to do from the loftiest and most sacred heights across twenty centuries.

But do you know the real joke of all this, doctor? In the end the massacre of four thousand unarmed Mamelukes did not even have the brutal excuse of utility. Napoleon did not win the Egyptian campaign. He sneaked off with his heroic tail between his legs and left his army to die on the sands of Egypt. First he sacrificed the Mamelukes for his army, then the army for his ambition.

Of course, in the end everything came out all right. Napoleon killed so many people and overran so many countries that all his acts became hallowed. The victor can do no wrong, our real morality says. We encourage the conquerors of the future by idolizing the conquerors of the past.

Suddenly, in that swiftly moving lorry, I recalled some verses Kurt had once written about Napoleon, long, long ago during his youthful "wander- and wonder-years." By the time I knew him in Vienna, he already insisted they were silly, yet now on my journey toward the prison camp they kept pounding through my brain: Kill, plunder, rape for empire or for glory; posterity is mightier than heaven: if you are conquered, all shall be forgotten; and if you conquer, all shall be forgiven.

I thought these things rumbling along in the closed, overcrowded lorry through the night, and suddenly realized I was laughing aloud. An officer's voice barked through the heavy cigarette smoke.

"Shut up, you swine!"

I stopped laughing. I was very tired. In some strange way which I can't explain, my fantasies and thoughts had completely exhausted me. I began to think of that film episode where little Caesar, at the end of his sensational career, is shot down like an animal, and I fell asleep.

3

*Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where
peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never
comes
That comes to all, but torture without end
Still urges . . .*

—*Paradise Lost.*

I WOKE TO THE SOUND of harsh voices. The truck had stopped and barking orders drove us out into the night air. We were in a large, murky courtyard. Around us were armed guards, some with rifles, others with whips in their hands. On three sides were huge, square buildings most of whose lights were out. It must be late. The fourth side of the courtyard contained a large iron gate which cut us off from the world. The guards shouted to us to form a single file and to march forward. There must have been about twenty of us. Some of the older men shuddered in the chilly wind. I had lost my hat in the scuffle out of the lorry. I would not need it here.

"Halt!" a voice barked. "Right face!"

A short, squat elite guard with shoulders like an ape's paced up and down in front of our line and looked us over in the gloom. He turned his flashlight on a sheet of paper in his hand and began to read off names, and each of us called out, "Present!"

Why waste time on details? Today everybody knows what a concentration camp is like. What is difficult to describe is civilized life. People have forgotten all about it. But torture, bloodshed, camps where men are herded and treated like beasts—these are the commonplace of Europe's latest phase.

Yes, we were marched up endless stairways, through endless corridors. The guards called us foul names and dealt us heavy blows. I received my first suddenly as we were going up a long, dark staircase. It came without warning, for no special reason. A blow on principle. I could not even tell in that dim light which guard had struck me; I knew only that a swift, hissing whip came out of the gloom and slashed the back of my neck. Blood rushed to my head. I felt dizzy. Then all was terribly calm and clear, and for the first

time I realized that the incredible had come. This was really happening to me.

As we passed through various hallways, men were taken one by one out of our line and thrown into cells. We could hear the iron doors opening and closing in the gloom. Finally some guard kicked me into a cell, and the iron door closed upon me. I looked around but could see little. I was too tired to be curious and fell asleep on the narrow iron cot.

The next morning I saw the cell was small. Daylight came in through a small grated window. The walls carried inscriptions which various prisoners who had preceded me had scrawled to silence monotony or ease the anguish of their despair: Long live democracy! . . . Long live socialism! . . . The Rights of Man, forever and a day! . . . Shema Yisroel, Adonoi Elehenu, Adonoi ekhod! . . . All men are created equal, but they don't stay that way very long! . . . Long live the international workingclass! . . . Dies irae, dies illa, solvet saeculum et favilla, teste David cum Sybilla. . . .

The door opened and a guard came in with a bowl of gruel and a suit of blue dungarees. He ordered me to undress, threw my clothes across his arm and left me alone. I got into the dungarees and tried the gruel. It tasted like sour water, but I was starved and ate every bit of it.

What day was this? I recalled yesterday's date. The thing to do was to mark the passing of the days on the wall, four straight lines close together and the fifth diagonally across. But my pencils were in the suit the guard had taken away. I was cut off from time.

I cannot tell you, doctor, how many days they kept me in solitary. The sun rose and set many times. Every day I was awakened at dawn by bugles blaring reveille in the courtyard; and every night darkness drew its black curtain over the little high window to the sound of taps blown far below.

Three times a day the guards brought me the same sour gruel, and three times a day I ate it gladly, because I was hungry and also because I was lonely. Whenever I had to go, I knocked on the iron door and a guard let me out to the toilet. Nobody spoke to me, and the endless silence was most oppressive at night. Only once was this silence broken. Through the dawn I heard coming up from the courtyard many voices singing in chorus. I had read how Goering's elite fostered the cult of the folk song among the prisoners, and now I caught some of the words:

If you have a mother still,
Thank your God and be contented:
Not to all upon this earth
Is this lofty joy presented.

I did think of my mother for the first time in many years and a great melancholy filled my heart. Then complete silence returned and for days I heard nothing. The monotonous routine went on with crushing regularity, till I began to wish something would happen, anything, anything rather than this timeless silence and isolation. And in these days and nights, certain that stone walls do not a prison make, my spirit sought escape from the lonely cell which imprisoned my body; it tried to escape to other places, far away and already unreal, and to flee the present to happier days in the past.

For though I have been telling you of necessity mostly about the tragic moments, the hours of loss and deprivation which have marked my life and that of my epoch, there now came to me in that lonely, narrow cell the happier moments; and each time an image from the past or a remembered emotion floated through my being, it was as if I had been awakened from a long nightmare to a great, luminous morning.

Often during my long wait I would think of my childhood in Vienna, and it seemed to me that the most atrocious crime of the brown oppressor was that he had robbed a whole generation of men of childhood's simple and healthy joys; for my own childhood now appeared to me as having been profoundly innocent and joyous. And remembering the opening of my life which came at the opening of our century, I saw again the great, luminous dawn flooding my stone cell, and heard through its heavenly light golden trumpets rejoicing in man's future.

Oh, here is the crowded living room in our old house! Father is surrounded by the wits and savants of Vienna and Mother is singing to them as they talk of the new winds of doctrine blowing freshly across the world full of the most glorious promise. And here is Marta bringing hot coffee with whipped cream for Arthur Schnitzler and Sigmund Freud to whom my father talks socialism in vain.

Another night, lying on the narrow, iron cot of my cell, I thought of my first friends—Oscar and Teddy and Siegfried, and my first fist-fight in a just cause, and how I came home and Marta read me from the Apocalypse. Oh, how angry Uncle Peter is becoming! He is young, as I first knew him, and I can see him clearly smoking his old pipe. And now he is taking me to my first Mass. I did not notice the details then; I was too overawed by the ritual as a whole; but every part of it comes back to me now until the prison walls vanish and I stand in St. Stephen's cathedral again, a boy who has not yet eaten of the Tree of Knowledge either as a man or as a historian. See the priest in the white amice to resist Satan, and the white alb of innocence, and the white cincture of charity; with the stole of immortality around his neck, and the chasuble of love, the cross

on its back, hanging down over all, and the biretta on his head. The candles are bright upon the altar, and the priest, taking the covered chalice in his hand, faces the altar and prays. The bread and wine are brought . . .

But Father is angry. I can see him now at the railway station, going off to the war. And his library, and the little green book, my first on socialism: "Even now the Russian proletariat has inaugurated the new cycles of revolutions which will from now on sweep over the industrial countries of this globe and clear the ground for a true civilization." Think of it: that was written in 1909! Trumpets at dawn. Mother is always singing, and how beautiful she looks when she accompanies me to my door and says good night. There is an immense booming of cannon. I can't recall the Piave very well, but how clearly I hear the artillery—boom! boom!—and it seems the solitary walls of my cell are trembling all over. But here I am back in Vienna, in Professor Gross's history class. What a fine voice he has, what fine thoughts, what absolutely just feeling about the world. And here is Father and his friends and their paper. The future! And those endless meetings where the hall is crowded with simple men and women transfigured by the sublime hope of the century. Trumpets at dawn. Oh, the great, luminous dawn that floods everything. Man will be free at last, now, now, today!

"I love you."

It's Babette. We are in Fontainebleau. It is raining outside and she loves me and I discover how greatly love can transfigure the visible and the tangible and transcend it in the airy spirals of Time. Perhaps Paris was the best of all. Boucher, Hague and Babette! And of course—everywhere the shade of Napoleon. But what is the answer to Condorcet? A thousand apologies, my dear M. de Condorcet! I have not thought of you for years. Here he is now, writing his book on the boundless expectations of man, writing it in the shadow of the guillotine; and the great, luminous dawn floods the world, and the golden trumpets of hope exult across the farthest ends of the earth, and lift the hearts of men high in the morning light of new history.

These memories filled my cell day and night through my long, terrible vigil in absolute isolation.

No, no, my father and his friends were the best. They had it all, fully, really. The trumpets were of steel, the dawn was fiery red, but the very foundations of the earth trembled, and the cry of the clarion, inexorably certain of man's future, reached across the whole round globe. I can see my father's face, loving and strong, smiling with assurance and wisdom, and I hear the trumpets again singing through the world's dawn.

But here I am in my classroom at the university, and the students are full of things to come, and there are books and thoughts and poems, all telling of man and his future; and there is the long trail of the past to teach us the wisdom of experience; and here is the most wonderful of all sagas, the saga of man, from the amoeba to Amos, and on and on and on; always the setting and the rising of the sun, always the trumpets at dawn, blowing the jubilant call that wakes all hearts, the living and the dead, blowing the most irresistible of reveilles to man—up! up! up! forward, forward, always forward!

Kurt knew all this better than I. Wasn't it he who coined the phrase *Trumpets at Dawn*? Of course! How stupid of me! It's the name of his first book of poems. How silly he seemed to me that first day at the railway station, how wonderful afterward. What pure faith animated his entire being, what hope, what charity toward all. And Hans: a man whose deeds spoke louder than his words. He let others watch the dawn and blow the trumpets, while he trained and led the legions of freedom. He is somewhere in a Nazi prison camp, like myself. Kurt is there, too, somewhere far off. Are they really there? are they really alive? The sun has set again; the trumpets are silent for the night. . . .

And now for the first time I can see Helga's face vaguely. I simply can't remember her. What was she doing at the time of the Schmerlingplatz massacre, or when they bombarded Floridsdorf with artillery, in those days before Hans had converted her? Her face belongs to the night and vanishes with it.

For dawn is here again, and Peggy fills my cell with the glory and love of her luminous being. We are on the Semmering, that first time, and the earth and sun feel good; they are real and clear and marvelous, and our love transcends all the past and seals with hope and absolute certainty all that is best in the future, and once more the trumpets exult in the clean, bright morning that floods the world.

It was the night I thought for hours about Peggy, and remembered our last supper together, that two guards unlocked the iron door of my solitary cell and ordered me to march ahead of them, up and down stairways, through dim corridors. Then they opened a heavy oak door and threw me into a large room with glaring lights.

Dizzy with solitude, I had difficulty in making out my surroundings. Then things became more clear. In one corner of the large room, a group of guards in black uniforms were smoking cigarettes, drinking beer and playing a game of cards. Several of them broke into brutal, mirthless laughter as they saw me looking around uncertainly.

I hear a deep groan. I glanced around; and there, in another

corner of the huge room, stood a long wooden table surrounded by four guards with whips in their hands. On the table lay a man completely naked. He lay on his belly and his wrists were handcuffed to the table. His head hung over the edge. It was covered with a heavy shock of golden hair, long and thick. The man's back was cut across with heavy welts, oozing blood.

One of the guards lifted his whip, dipped it slowly into a large pail of water standing beside the table, tested it carefully. Then he raised it high in the air and brought it down swiftly on the man's back. The man tightened all his muscles in agony, and a muffled cry came reluctantly from his unseen face. A new welt gathered on his back and the blood came up slowly.

"That will do!" a clear, commanding voice ordered.

I looked away from the man on the table and turned toward the center of the room. Behind a wide desk stood a man in black uniform with the insignia of high rank. He was tall and thin and there was peculiar grace and power in his movements.

Against my will I turned to look at the table again. I did not want to do it. The sight of the bleeding back sickened me, yet I felt an irresistible compulsion to look. The guards uncuffed the man's hands and helped him to his feet. They threw him a pair of blue dungaree trousers and a cotton shirt of the same color. The man was hardly able to stand on his feet, but he made an effort and dressed slowly. When he had buttoned his clothes, he combed his long hair back with his fingers. Now I could see his face clearly, and a violent shudder shook my entire being.

"Step over here, Kurt Hertzfeld," said the voice from the center of the room.

There was an inexorable quality of command in it. Kurt slowly walked to the desk, and stood before it calmly.

"Yes, Inspector Keller," he said.

The two men faced each other from either side of the desk. The guards in the corner kept on playing their game of cards; several others came and stood behind me at attention. I began to feel faint, and my head reeled.

"Here, you!" the inspector snapped to one of the guards. "Bring that man over here. He looks ill."

To my surprise he pointed at me. I had ceased to believe this was happening, that I was really in a concentration camp. The inspector's consideration was puzzling. The guard took me by the arm and led me to the desk.

"Sit down," the inspector said, pointing to a chair. "I'll attend to you in a moment."

I sat down beside the desk and looked at Kurt's face. Even in

this gruesome hellhole the features were still delicate, almost beautiful, like those of the nineteenth century romantic poets; but now the strength that always lurked behind them lay uppermost. It was lined with an iron pride. Despite his obvious physical agony, he looked calmly at the inspector, ignoring me completely. The inspector, however, focused his eyes on me.

Now that I could see him at closer range, Inspector Keller turned out to be a truly surprising figure. He was tall, thin and quite dark of complexion; his hair was black and rather curly; a pair of coal-black eyes flashed from under bushy eyebrows; the nose was thin, aquiline, far more Roman than "Aryan." But these were not the only surprising features about him. What was really unexpected was the air of culture, almost of refinement, which marked the dark long face, the powerful well-trained body, and the clear voice in which he spoke. Only when he placed his hands on the desk to leaf through a batch of papers was there a suggestion of infinite brutality. In contrast to the thin features and long body, the hands were short and square, and the fingers powerfully blunt. And now I realized that this strange, ominous figure was speaking to me.

"Who are you?" he said curtly.

I started to rise from my chair.

"No, no!" he ordered suavely. "Remain seated, please. Just answer my questions."

"My name is Paul Schuman."

The inspector glanced keenly at me, then picked up a sheet of paper and read through it briefly.

"Hmmm. *Professor* Paul Schuman. Son of a radical editor, the late Arthur Schuman. Teacher of *Kulturgeschichte* at the University of Vienna." The inspector half read half spoke these words, looking at me all the while with a strange light in his black eyes. "What a pleasure to meet so distinguished a scholar," he went on. "A pleasure indeed."

This speech was as unexpected as everything else about Inspector Keller. I had to remind myself sharply that I was a prisoner in a concentration camp. What was the object of the inspector's elaborate politeness? Was he making fun of me? Was he softening me psychologically for the examination that was bound to come? I felt Kurt's blue eyes upon me, but could read nothing in them. He seemed to be staring right through me, without being aware of my existence.

"I shall be through with Mr. Hertzfeld presently," the inspector said to me. "Then you and I will have a quiet little talk." He turned to Kurt smiling. "Now, Mr. Hertzfeld, I believe we have given you sufficient proof these last few weeks that we are quite in earnest. Do you still persist in refusing to answer questions?"

Kurt smiled but said nothing.

"I realize how stubborn you are," the inspector continued as he began to pace up and down behind his desk. "I have met artists before. They are the most self-willed people in the world. They have to be. It requires a special power of will, an incurable stubbornness to pursue a calling which the world despises until you are dead. But in this case I must ask you to relent a little. If not for your own sake, at least for the sake of the Herr Professor here."

The inspector smiled in my direction. Kurt now looked at me as if he had become aware of my existence for the first time in his life. Then he looked squarely into the inspector's dark face and said quietly:

"Was the professor here while they beat me?"

"Yes, indeed he was," Inspector Keller said eagerly. "It made him sick."

I felt my stomach turn at the very mention of the frightful scene I had witnessed on entering the room.

"Then I think I can guess what's on your mind," Kurt said grimly.

Inspector Keller stopped in front of me, and looking down at my face, said with premeditated softness:

"You see, professor, how remarkable poetic instincts can be. Mr. Hertzfeld is a poet, and he says he has divined my secret thought. And would you believe it? I think he actually has!" He turned to Kurt and went on: "When the professor saw you strapped to the table with gashes down your back, he turned green. At that moment it struck me: here is a man who has lived vicariously all his life; therefore he suffers vicariously. I must find some way of making him suffer vicariously."

"That's what I thought," said Kurt.

"Ha! Ha!" The inspector laughed sardonically. "Then your poetic instinct is in perfect working order today. Yes, that is precisely the idea which has occurred to me. As for you, my dear Professor Schuman—you so-called intellectuals show an unexpected talent for enduring physical suffering. That is probably due to the fact that you do not respect your own bodies. What you do care about are your minds. It is suffering there that you find most difficult to bear. I saw you nearly fall to pieces at the sight of Hertzfeld lying on that table. Do you know what? Whenever you get too stubborn, we'll bring you in here to witness the sufferings of others. That ought to make you feel at home."

The inspector obviously wanted to be ironical, but I was too confused and frightened to make anything of his fantastic speech.

"Now, Mr. Hertzfeld," he said to Kurt, "our patience is infinite. There is only one of you, but many of us. In the end it is we who

shall wear you out. Why don't you talk now, while there is still some life left in your body?"

"I have nothing to say," Kurt replied.

Inspector Keller sat down behind his desk, stretched his long legs under it and slowly lit a cigarette. He blew the smoke toward the ceiling and reflected for a moment. The clink of beer glasses in the corner sounded very loud. Guards were washing the long wooden table on which I had seen Kurt beaten. The inspector turned to him now.

"So you still insist you know nothing about Hans Bayer?"

"I didn't say that," Kurt replied. "I said I did not know him until I came here except in the most cursory way. Naturally I knew something about him. He is a public figure."

"And you know nothing of his activities before he came here?"

"Only what I've read in the papers."

"Then you know he was in the party."

"That's no secret."

"And you know"—the inspector's voice rose sharply now—"that he is head of the secret organization among the prisoners here, that he has connections with the Underground on the outside."

"I have nothing to tell you about any secret organization," Kurt said.

"Do you mean you don't know or won't say?"

"I have no information to give you that can be of any value to you."

"Your answers are positively Jesuitical," the inspector said. He rose abruptly, threw his cigarette on the floor and crushed it with his black boot. "Sehr gut! That will be all for today. But don't worry. We shall continue our conversations in the very near future."

He waved his hand. Two guards walked over to Kurt, took him by the arms and marched him out of the big room.

Inspector Keller sat down behind his desk again, picked up a sheet of paper and glanced at it for a few moments in silence. Then he looked up at me and said:

"And now, my dear Professor Schuman, we'll talk about you a little."

4

*And in the lowest deep a lower deep,
Still threat'ning to devour me, opens wide,
To which the hell I suffer seems a heaven.*
—Paradise Lost.

SLOWLY, AS IF WAKING FROM A DREAM, I rose to my feet. I had been watching the scene as though it had not been real at all, almost as though I were not in the room. Now the inspector's voice brought me back to reality. I stood stiffly facing him, and the sweat poured down my back. Inspector Keller looked at me smiling, and his dark face glistened in the garish light of the lamp overhead.

"Professor Schuman," he said, "compared to most of the other prisoners here, the charges against you seem rather mild. You appear to have been politically inactive. But you did belong to the League for the Rights of Man, and you must realize I am not permitted to count that in your favor." His provocative smile grew wider as he went on: "On the whole, you may be said to be a rather harmless fellow; that is, from any viewpoint but ours. Unfortunately, from that viewpoint, there are some dark spots on your record."

He rose, placed his hands behind his back and began walking up and down again.

"I am going to surprise you in many ways, professor," he said. "And I may as well give you the first surprise now. I am not going to tell you that you have been arrested simply because you have not been for us. You know that famous saying: he that is not for us is against us. But in your case we consider that a minor matter. The main charge against you is that you are a so-called intellectual. You are a man who thinks."

My lips were very dry and I passed my tongue over them. I was terribly thirsty, but afraid to ask for a drink. I had read in concentration camp memoirs that this only leads to trouble. The inspector looked quickly at me and turned to one of the guards.

"Give the Professor a drink of water!" he ordered.

The guard brought me some water and, without thinking, I gulped it down. It was good, clean, cooling water.

"Now, professor," the inspector resumed, "men who think are the most dangerous men in the world. They are the source of all our troubles. Men who think are dangerous to the established order no matter what they think. Take yourself, for example. Your thoughts are unrealistic. They are stupid. They are wrong from A to Z. But they are thoughts. And therein lies your chief crime against our party and our Leader. Your thoughts never have and never will affect the world. But you have made a fetish of the process. You carry the dangerous torch around with you; and with it you may set on fire some real brain. The students you teach may never retain a single one of your fantastic, childish ideas. But they can never forget your enthusiasm for ideas—and that we cannot permit."

He opened his cigarette case and held it out to me.

"Here, have a smoke, professor. And sit down. You will need all the strength you can muster, I assure you."

My hand trembled as I picked a cigarette and sank into my chair. The inspector struck a match for me, and lit a cigarette for himself.

"You see, professor, unlike so many of our enemies, we have really studied history. What is more, we have learned from it. Let idiots prattle all they like about the mechanics of life. We know the importance of that; but we also know the importance in history of the passions and of the mind. And we have learned to crush the one and to harness the other for our purposes."

He blew some smoke through his nostrils and closed his black eyes for a moment. Then he opened them and said suddenly:

"Have you ever met Kurt Hertzfeld before?"

"Casually."

"Have you ever met a man named Hans Bayer?"

"Casually."

"I suppose you're going to tell me you know very little about these two men."

"That's right."

"Did Hans Bayer control the League for the Rights of Man?"

"Not to my knowledge."

"Who was on the Executive Committee?"

Several names leaped to my mind, but I was determined to reveal nothing, regardless of consequences.

"Don't you remember?" Inspector Keller said, smiling cynically.

"No, sir."

"As you please, professor. You will find that in the long run everything comes out as we want it. Your friend Mr. Hertzfeld has

even made an amusing aphorism about it: 'In this Inferno, the prisoner proposes but the inspector disposes.'"

Inspector Keller opened a drawer in his desk and took out a large package done up in brown wrapping paper tied with a heavy string. He snapped the string with his blunt, powerful fingers, and unfolded the wrapper. I recognized the contents at once and involuntarily stood up.

"Calm yourself, professor," the Inspector said. I remained standing as he lifted the old yellow parchment and weighed it slowly in his hand. "This is *not* code, is it, professor?" he said.

"No, sir."

"That's what I thought. The officer who searched your room insisted it was code, but I know better. This is an ancient manuscript of some kind, I take it."

"Yes. It's a fourth century parchment which some archaeologist discovered near Rome."

"Can you read it?"

"Partly. It's in the Umbrian dialect, a variant of Latin rarely known these days."

"What does it say, as far as you can make out?"

For the first time since my arrival in that room I felt myself smiling. Poor Eusebius! Many things must have happened to you in these past fifteen centuries, but you certainly did not think you would end up in a concentration camp. Neither did I.

"I can tell you the little I know, if you like," I said to the inspector.

"Go ahead."

"All I can make out of that script is that in the fourth century Anno Domini there lived somewhere in Italy a man named Eusebius. It is clear he was a Christian. Some of the expressions would definitely indicate that. There is the phrase 'episcopal envy,' for example, and the word 'synod.' Then, there are phrases which indicate there was a trial of some kind in which Eusebius was involved, possibly two trials. But in what manner, before whom and for what cause is not at all clear. Finally, there is that broken sentence which you can see for yourself, once toward the end of the manuscript and here again in these two places. It says: MEN . . . CAPACITY . . . VALUE. I find that quite a mysterious phrase; there is nothing like it in fourth century literature that I know of."

The inspector listened to all this with the greatest attention, watching me all the time with caution in his black eyes.

"Are you sure this is not a forgery?" he asked.

"I doubt it. It seems to me absolutely authentic. I wish I knew the story behind it."

"Very well. I'll have it sent to Berlin. It will be presented to some museum or university. Let the scholars pursue this mystery of Eusebius. The more they think about the fourth century, the less they will think about the twentieth."

He lifted the brown wrapping paper from the package, threw it into the basket under his wide desk and brought up my notebook on the story of democracy. Thumbing through the pages slowly, he said:

"Hmmm . . . a most original title . . . *Of Human Freedom* . . . Spinoza?"

"Yes."

A malicious twinkle came into his eyes.

"I've glanced through this unique opus of yours, professor. There are some very unsavory references to us in these pages. Lies, dirty democratic lies all the way through."

He read quickly down one page and added:

"I will be even more specific. It speaks disrespectfully of our Leader."

He closed my notebook abruptly, walked across the room to the wooden table on which I had first seen Kurt, and into the water pail which stood near it he dropped my manuscript on human freedom.

"We can save the public the trouble of reading this trash," he said. I walked to the water pail and stood there watching the pages of my book wilt and sink in the murky water, and my heart sank with them. The inspector turned sharply to one of the guards and snapped:

"Take this shit out of here and get rid of it in the usual place."

I watched the guard lift the pail with my waterlogged manuscript. He swung it sardonically as he left the room. I felt as if this moment closed the gates on the whole of my previous life. The inspector turned to me with a broad smile.

"And now, my dear professor, I think I have some pressing business elsewhere. I shall leave you to our friends here. Believe me, they will take good care of you." He bowed ironically and clicked his heels together. "Servus!" he said; and, wheeling around in military precision, left the room.

Several guards seized me. They stripped me naked and threw me face down on the long wooden table. It was useless to resist my tormentors; but the strangest ideas came hammering through my head. At first I thought only about Kurt and Hans and that they were here in the same concentration camp with me. I heard the babble of the guards' voices through the smoke-filled room, and felt them strapping my wrists and ankles to the table; I caught the sound of the whip being rustled in the water pail. But I could not

think of the torture I was about to endure. Instead the strange thought came:

I've spent my whole life loving friends, teaching young people, reading books; and all that time there was this other life, utterly remote, in which fierce men deliberately trained themselves in barbarism and violence, and these men now rule the realm, and their ugly shadows loom across the earth. This is what five thousand years of history comes to. This is what Hammurabi's code, the vision of Moses, the wisdom of Socrates, the love of Christ, the dreams of Rousseau, the serene wisdom of Goethe, the noble justice of Engels—this is what it all comes to. Five thousand years of gigantic, unending conflict for the good life, and in the end some men whip others as they would not whip a dog.

"Kaschumbo!" a hoarse voice shouted. "Thirty lashes. . . . One!"

The wet whip came down on my back like a rod of fire. The pain was unbearable. So, too, the degradation. But what about him, the man who is wielding the whip? Isn't his degradation even greater? I am at this moment an animal beaten without mercy; but isn't the man incapable of mercy lower than the lowest of animals?

"Two!"

My back roared with agony, and my head slid sideways over the edge of the table. With each blow, reality vanished into utter darkness. Consciousness returned just in time to be aware that the next stroke of the wet whip was ripping down upon my skin. I heard my own voice, far away, scream in despair, then moan, then roll away into a continuous whine like some nightmare creature under the inexorable rack. At last I lost all consciousness, and everything vanished completely.

When I awoke, I was lying on the narrow iron cot in my solitary cell. Light came in through the small, barred window high on the wall. I was naked. I lay on my belly and listened to my flaming back roar with pain. My ankles and wrists were chained to the iron sides of my cot. Was I still alive? I could not think straight; wild images and crazy words rolled endlessly through my aching brain.

First came those fantastic, unbidden movie scenes. Fred Astaire dancing with Ginger Rogers. A beautiful waltz. The music was beautiful. Ginger Rogers was beautiful. The graceful American couple glided through space and vanished into the wall of the cell. Then the music stopped abruptly. They are killing us here. They are killing Hans, and Kurt and me and a thousand others. They are killing countless in Europe. Soon they will kill millions the world over. We used to think we knew the answers to everything.

We didn't even know the right questions. The empires are falling down the abyss of time. Babylon and Egypt, Assyria and Greece and Rome. Now these barbarians are dragging Europe down. Let it fall! Let it perish like the rest!

What an insane satisfaction. Who wants civilization to fall? It hasn't really started yet. We are still climbing out of the primeval slime. We must win.

How?

With great effort I looked around the cell, but the strange thoughts drew me back into their fantastic vortex. Primitive school-boy questions obsessed me. What has made man so brutal through the ages? Then, for no reason at all, a truly fantastic idea came to me; not a dream or a vision, but an idea—the idea of Cromwell's head on a pike.

Do you know that one, doctor? Do you know what happened after the restoration? Think of it. The Puritan Revolution is crushed. Cromwell is dead and buried. His companions-in-arms are in hiding, in prison, in exile or dead by the executioner's sword.

Always the executioner is there.

Yes, it's all over. Cromwell is dead and buried. But that is not enough for his foes, the foes of the English people. They must trample on Cromwell's memory; they must shame him. And through him they must shame the English people and all mankind. The corpse of the great liberator is dug out of its grave. It is decapitated. Yes, the hero is dead, but his head must be cut off. It is stuck on a pike and exhibited for posterity to jeer at.

What for? What practical use is there in this act of brutality and degradation? None whatever. Yet there is Cromwell's head outside Westminster Abbey, a hero's lonely head upon a pike, and there it remains for *twenty-five years*!

That was Cromwell. What do *you* expect?

Exhausted by these irrational thoughts, I fell into a profound stupor.

Days of infinite torture followed. Over and over again I was hauled out of my solitary cell to the inspector's office and cross-examined with icy persistence. He was never there. Others asked me about friends who had resisted the foe's encroachment. I always refused to tell, and the result was always the same. I was lashed with wet whips, beaten with truncheons, kicked by heavy boots.

But I knew I was not alone in this horror. Never for a moment now did I feel isolated, abandoned, lonely. I heard other prisoners scream, saw writhing bodies whipped on the long wooden table and twisted corpses carried out, and though the communion was cruel

beyond words, it was a communion, a sanguinary bond which united me with my fellows.

That was not all. I knew that outside the prison camp, in the great world around us whose life was now so remote and so mysterious, the same agony pervaded the cities and villages. Everywhere men suffered as we suffered. Wherever the immense catastrophe had penetrated, life had become identical with death. Everywhere Caesar's legions trampled those who had seen the light of a better world.

Through the centuries we had asked for bread, and now we had received a stone. We had sought freedom and had attained a concentration camp. Had not the whole world become one vast concentration camp?

But this very fact made it bearable. What men suffer in common they can endure; it is isolation that is the greatest catastrophe. And now I no longer felt isolated. Alone in my narrow cell I was not lonely. I felt at one with mankind which blindly had prepared this sorrow with its own hands.

As I said, Inspector Keller was not present these days when the guards flung me face down on the long wooden table and whipped me. I was always taken straight to the big room, questioned by subordinates, beaten into complete senselessness and carried back to my cell; and never once did the inspector appear.

One day, however, I was brought by guards into the large room, and there was Inspector Keller sitting behind his desk, dark, tall, elegantly dressed like the first time in black uniform and polished boots, and smoking a cigarette from a long ivory holder, I was amazed at the calm with which he presided over this inferno and thought of Torquemada, the sinister head of the Spanish Inquisition who also imagined he was performing a sacred duty in torturing dissenters. With a broad grin, the inspector ordered me to sit down near the desk, but my body was in such wild pain that I had to remain standing.

"How do you feel, professor?" he said. "Not so good, I imagine. That's what you get for being a historian. From our viewpoint, a historian is a very dangerous creature. We are building a world of masters and slaves. That is how nature meant society to be constituted. It was always constituted that way from the days of the Pharaohs to those of Robespierre. The French Revolution interrupted the course of nature and of history. It is the great crime of the ages. What are you smiling at, professor? Speak up!"

"Your history is not very accurate, sir. And as for nature—"

"Don't contradict me, professor. I tell you we are going to restore the laws of nature, which inexorably decrees that there shall

be masters and slaves, everywhere, always, forever and ever. This is no capricious conclusion of my own. It comes from an inspired, infallible source. The Fuehrer himself told me recently that we shall breed a new aristocracy from the human reserves of the SS. We shall do systematically, on the basis of scientific, biological knowledge, what the old blood aristocracy of former days did by instinct. . . . Why are you smiling now?"

"I beg your pardon. Spengler has always made me smile."

The inspector's face became red, but he controlled himself.

"The Fuehrer does not need Spengler or anybody else for his ideas! He is an original genius who creates his own ideas! I tell you we are going to create an aristocracy to govern first Europe, then the world. To govern efficiently, we must have at the center a nucleus of power as hard and firm as steel. We shall deliberately create a master class, a historical class tempered by battle and welded from the most varied elements. There will be a great hierarchy of party members. There will be a new middle class. And there will be the anonymous, the serving collective, the eternally disfranchised, no matter whether they were once businessmen, landed proprietors, workingmen or farmers. And beneath all these there will be the class of subject alien races—the races we are going to conquer by war. That is exactly how the Fuehrer put it to me, and he did not hesitate to call the conquered races the *modern slave class*. That is what the Fuehrer called them. And over all these slave groups will stand the new high aristocracy we are creating. You professors and bookworms cannot understand this, but that is just how it is going to be; that is how we shall make it be. We must have true artistocracy, therefore true subjection. We do not intend to abolish the inequality of men. On the contrary, we are going to deepen it. As in the great civilizations of the ancient world—Assyria, Egypt, Babylon—we shall create insurmountable barriers between the classes, especially between the masters and the slaves. And we shall never concede to other nations equal rights with the Germans—never, never!"

Inspector Keller was now quite wrought up. He began to walk up and down behind his wide desk, smoking one cigarette after another. Suddenly he faced me sharply.

"You historians spoil our plans!" he snapped. "The art of history, the recorded memory of the past, is one of our greatest dangers. It reminds people of what you would call the crimes of the tyrant and the heroism of those who resist him. We must destroy that memory. We must exterminate the sense of continuity in social experience. By this we shall be doing men a great favor. They have been slaves from time immemorial anyway; why torture them with

dreams of freedom which can never be fulfilled? It will be better for them not to remember anything. Memory and knowledge are for masters, never for slaves! Already we have destroyed the truth about our own rise to power. We have created a myth. Wherever we conquer, that myth will be accepted as gospel truth. You book-worms will never understand what absolute power can accomplish. Yes, in the hands of the conqueror the lie becomes the truth, the sole truth! And there must be no historians to tamper with it."

He was calm again now. Taking his seat behind his wide desk, he grinned at me and said:

"Come, professor, haven't you been playing with the idea that you may someday record the events you witness in this camp?"

I did not answer, but the inspector had read my thoughts aright. All my life I had been teaching the history of far-off times; the books I had written always dealt with the past. I had often envied the ability of Peggy and Hague to get themselves to places where history was in the making, to witness the living event, to set it down on the record. And now, for the first time in my experience, I was part of the living event; however small, however insignificant it was in the great contemporary drama, it was nevertheless a part of it, and the desire to record all this was great in me.

"What a pleasure it is to see you suffer for your crimes, professor," the inspector said. "I want you to witness all that goes on here, knowing that you can never record it. The greatest punishment which can be inflicted on a man of your caliber is to prevent him from exercising his natural gifts, from plying the trade to which nature and fortune have assigned him. I know men of your type—the poets, the painters, the religious fanatics, the radical idealists, the philosophers. They will endure poverty, obscurity, humiliation, anything, so long as they can do their work. Well, you won't be able to do your work. You will sit here and watch history in the making and won't be able to record it. Even if you are lucky enough to get out of our hands, it won't do you any good. By that time we shall be ruling the world. Every previous revolution in history has had its secrets extracted. Thousands of volumes have been written about them. But the real story of the totalitarian revolution will remain a secret to posterity."

"You won't conquer the world," I said. "And no deeds like yours can ever be wholly concealed. Somehow the truth will escape from these treacherous walls, and frankly I keep myself alive in the hope that I may tell it."

"You talk like a schoolboy, professor. Surely you don't believe the old fantasy that sooner or later the truth must triumph?"

"Sooner or later the truth comes out," I said. "The real story

of your crimes will become known. Nothing is ever really lost. Remember that Eusebian manuscript you took from me? Even that came to light after being lost in the earth for fifteen hundred years, and someday someone will discover his true story."

"You are mistaken, my dear professor. As far as this place is concerned, there will be gossip, conjectures, theories, guesses—anything but the real truth. You will never get out of our hands alive. For you, my dear professor, there will be no history and no posterity. These things will happen to you, and they will be spurlos versenkt in the seas of time. Do you know that wonderful saying that nothing is more disagreeable than to be hanged obscurely? Ha! Ha! Things will happen to you, professor, and they will be forgotten! For you there will be no future, only the present, evanescent moment and the immense burden of the remembered past. And when we get through with people like yourself, there will not even be that past. When we complete the conquest of the world, there will be for most men neither past nor future, neither memory nor foresight; only the unmitigated obedience of the brute moment."

The inspector smiled ironically and with elegant deliberation lit a fresh cigarette.

"I'll tell you something else, my dear professor. If you do manage to survive this camp—which I very much doubt—and if you do write down the history of these days, at least I shall cut quite a figure in it. And I've always agreed with the Renaissance proverb that it is better to be remembered in the prayers with Judas Iscariot than to be a forgotten saint. . . . Like Eusebius, eh?"

The inspector laughed as he rose abruptly. He turned his back on me and left the room without saying a word.

That was a signal for the worst beating I had received since my arrival at the concentration camp. The wet whip came down upon my back screaming wildly. I heard it in my ears, and heard it tearing through the mad tension of my soul. It came down again and again and again, ripping through the very last membrane of my existence. No, you must not die! Not yet! Not now! Soon the roaring pain seemed to be wholly outside my awareness. I heard a loud bell clanging in my ears. The unspeakable agony was burning through me, yet I still knew it was I, still identified myself with myself. Then, in a vast, aching void, the light of the world went out.

*A curse, a curse
 A curse upon him
 Who shall let the remembrance
 Of these crimes grow dim:
 And a curse upon them,
 When the battle's in flood,
 Who shall fail to avenge
 Our innocent blood!*
 —*Concentration Camp Ballad.*

A WEEK LATER they hauled me into the inspector's office at noon and made me stand for an hour with my face toward the wall. The inspector himself was not present, but various subordinates directed the beating of prisoners on the long wooden table, and behind me I could hear the piercing screams which with every stroke of the whip grew fainter and fainter until they died out in one last whimper and the victim was dragged out of the room.

Finally one of the inspector's aides called me to the desk and read me a long report from the Gestapo in Vienna describing in great detail that afternoon on the campus when I had saved Professor Gross from a group of students. I had not followed up the incident, so had never learned the names of the students involved; but the Gestapo report contained everything, including several whopping lies. The students were strangers to me, nevertheless I did not believe it was they who had said that Professor Gross and I had attacked them out of a clear sky and that they had been compelled to defend themselves against this "Jewish conspiracy." That was obviously a Gestapo invention. The report was read to me with pompous gravity, but I was asked no questions.

"The case is clear," said the inspector's aide curtly.

He signaled to a group of guards. These threw me on the long table and beat me senseless.

It was dusk when I awoke in my solitary cell, and looked in stupor at its square stone walls. My brain was dizzy and kept going round and round in circles. Soon these melted into a single circle that whirled around the cell as the wax record whirls around

the square top of the phonograph in Marcel Duchamps's film of geometry in motion. Swiftly the vast circle whirled round and round; then it rose toward me slowly and slowly receded, and my ears were filled with the sound of harpsichord and flute playing César Franck's *Prelude, Chorale and Fugue*. In agony from wounds the guards had inflicted upon me, I lay on my belly, closed my eyes and fled in fancy to the music which flowed through the night. And now, vivid and beautiful, the image of Peggy leaned over me and I could see her lovely face distinctly and her lips were gentle and warm on mine. Then the image vanished and I opened my eyes with a start. Out there in the real world I had lived with things which existed and appeared to exist, things which did not exist and did not appear to exist, and things which existed but did not appear to exist; and now I was in the shadow of things which did not exist but appeared to exist. I looked straight ahead of me and forced my whole soul to cling to that which appeared to exist and implacably did exist—the gray walls around me. How empty was this narrow world of stone! For weeks I had not seen anyone except my tormentors. Somewhere there were other prisoners in this camp. I had seen several of them in the inspector's room; I had heard cries of agony wailing through the corridors. And now a great longing came over me to be part of their life, to be a member of a human community, albeit a community of suffering.

There was a sound at the iron door. I heard it open but did not turn around to see who it was. My wrists and ankles were shackled to the cot; my knees were still bloody from the day's beating; and it was hard to move.

"Good evening, my dear professor," said Inspector Keller's voice. "How do you feel? I am not asking out of sympathy, you understand. I hope you're not feeling well."

I lay across the cot face down, and could hear his smooth, ironic voice close above me, and a great rage filled my heart. I wanted to get up and smash his eyes into their sockets, knowing perfectly well they would kill me for it. This sudden upsurge of rage and cruelty within me came as a surprise, but I was glad of it. Then I realized the futility of the whole thing. The rage subsided and I thought: this is what you must expect; he is the implacable adversary; none of us here can hope for mercy; face everything as a matter of course; resist, survive.

"You must excuse these beatings," the inspector went on sardonically. "They are not important—to us. Mere preliminary routine. I have far more interesting things in store for you. Would you like to know what happened to your Umbrian manuscript?"

"Yes," I said involuntarily.

"Ah," the inspector said, "I touched a soft spot that time. You were determined not to answer, but curiosity about Eusebius got the better of you, didn't it? Well, your precious fourth century parchment is safe in a Berlin museum. The savants are working on it. So far they can't make out a word except what you've left in your notes. But that's a start, and they'll keep on trying."

There was hope, then. Eusebius would not be lost in the bottomless pit of time.

"How do you feel about your book on human freedom, professor?" the inspector continued. "It hurts, doesn't it? You grapple with a problem all your life, write it out with the sweat of your brain and the blood of your heart, and then the book is thrown on the garbage dump, gone forever. Ah, how that hurts. But console yourself, professor. Suppose we had not seized Vienna; suppose your book had been published in what used to be called the 'normal course of events.' Would that have been better? You know how blind and deaf some critics can be, how they can skim through the sweat of your brain and the blood of your heart and see nothing but trifles there, how they can laugh a lifework to pieces without taking the trouble to find out what you are really trying to say. Would that have been better? You ought to be grateful, professor. By destroying your book I have left you at least one consolation. You can go on dreaming that if you had published it, society might have considered it useful. See what a lucky dog you are. You still have an illusion!"

There was genuine pleasure in his low chuckle. Then his voice suddenly shot out:

"How old are you, professor?"

"Today I am a thousand," I said.

"Hmmm . . . yet you think like a schoolboy, and what is worse, like a liberal. We've investigated you a little further. You're not as innocent as you pretend to be. We know all about your little escapade in the Schmerlingplatz. We know you used to hang around at Floridsdorf meetings. And we know that, though you did not agree with your father, you were quite fond of the old fellow, despite his abominable activities."

With a great effort I rolled over on my right side, and looked straight at the inspector. He loomed up sinister in his black SS uniform.

"You see, my dear professor," he said, "all I have to do is to mention your father and you get well again. I don't blame you. The old man is dead, but he could get you out of this prison in a minute—if you wanted to."

"What are you talking about?" I said, getting angry again.

"What crazy mysteries are these? How could *he* get me out if *I* wanted to?"

"Don't be in a hurry, professor. We'll come to that presently. First let me tell you what else we have found out. We know you used to put up a number of Marxist scoundrels at your house—Kurt Hertzfeld, for instance."

Who told them? Helga?

"Do you mean to say," the inspector went on, "that you really don't know what went on in Vienna politics before we got there? that you never heard of the Underground? that Hans Bayer is only a casual acquaintance? . . . Very well, you can be stubborn if you like. We are bound to break you in the end. I am going to put you in the Big Hall with Hans Bayer, and we'll see what happens."

I never dreamed the inspector could say anything to make me glad, but here it was. I would see Hans Bayer. Where was the Big Hall? what was it? No matter: I would be with other prisoners, truly alive again because living as an integral part of a community.

The inspector towered above me in the narrow cell, and the smile on his face was satanic.

"From the standpoint of practical politics," he said, "we consider you a louse, an utterly trivial and insignificant louse. What concerns us most is your teaching. I can't emphasize that too strongly. Would you be interested to know that some of your students have volunteered information against you? Not just any students, mind you; not those whom you assaulted with the aid of Jew Gross; but your own students, favorites even. . . . Ah, you wince! You did not expect that, professor. See what a louse you are, what a trivial insignificant louse. Of course your favorite students squealed on you. What have you to offer them? Do you think people are grateful for the truth? Do you think they appreciate being taken seriously? Do you think they love those who nurture their spirits in the wisdom of the ages? What a fool you are, professor! You piddle around with history and do not understand its most elementary lessons. What about Socrates and a thousand other teachers across the centuries, infinitely superior to you in every way, who were compelled to drink the hemlock? People are always glad to learn from you whatever will help them overcome you, and the more they owe you the more they hate you. Yes, some of your favorite disciples informed against you, professor. They understood that you have nothing to offer them any more, while we have."

This time I could not restrain myself.

"What do you offer them?" I said. "Hunger, misery, slavery, ignorance and a gruesome, useless death on the battlefield—these are your gifts to youth."

"A schoolboy and a louse," the inspector said, looking down on me contemptuously. "Don't you know what we have to offer their slavish spirits? We are in a position to kill them—that's what! We wield the greatest power on earth, the power of inflicting the ultimate, irrevocable punishment. Therefore we also have the power to grant them the greatest reward. We can withhold that punishment! We can permit them to exist! Sure, they will exist like the beasts of the field, but for that tremendous privilege they are glad to serve us and betray you. And do you know? They don't even consider themselves traitors. On the contrary, they feel like heroes. They are exposing a liberal scoundrel like yourself to the sacred Fatherland! You did not expect that, did you, professor? Well, think it over in the Big Hall. Yes, while you are there, give this little problem your earnest attention. It took us only five years to train a generation of monsters. That's what they are, you know—monsters. We know it. We have created them deliberately. It is only with monsters that we can crush whole classes and whole nations. Whoever wishes to undo our work in the world will never be able to reform these monsters, to restore any semblance of humanity to their souls. It's too late for that. If your side wants real victory, you will have to wipe out this whole generation of Nazis—if you can catch them. That's how thoroughly we have done our job, and it has taken us only five years. But Christianity is two thousand years old, and liberalism three hundred, and socialism eighty—and all three of them have failed to raise one generation of saints! How do you explain that, professor? Well, you'll have plenty of time to think about that in the Big Hall. . . . Sergeant Muehlbach!"

I turned my head painfully, and saw coming into the cell a short, stocky man of about forty-five in black SS uniform. He greeted the inspector with the Hitler salute and stood stiffly at attention.

"Take the professor to the Big Hall," Inspector Keller ordered.

The sergeant unlocked the handcuffs which chained me to the iron cot. I rose slowly and began to dress in my blue dungaree prison suit. The inspector watched me sardonically and said:

"There's something else I'd like you to think over, professor. Your book on human freedom has cost you a lot of grief. It will cost you more in the days to come. The scribe must know his place again. When he mixes in politics, he usurps the place of the leader; when he chatters like a magpie about military affairs, he usurps the place of the war lord; when he lays down the moral law, he usurps the place of the priest. Our motto is: scribbler, stick to your pen; Your job is to write what we dictate—or be silent forever."

I was becoming accustomed to the inspector's peculiar attacks, and went on dressing without a word.

"You smile, professor," he said. "Your face is like a mashed turnip, and still you can smile. Be grateful for that. Answer me: what do you think of my method—torture by metaphysics?"

"The term is not very accurate, sir."

"Maybe not. Just the same I am proud of my method. It's a special war of nerves which strikes at the most vulnerable spot. The important thing is to kill the last vestige of faith in you; to make you suffer the tortures of the damned, oscillating between belief and unbelief in the future of man; to compel your spirit to hover in frightful uncertainty between life and death, like the victim caught between the pit and the pendulum. The rest will take care of itself."

Sergeant Muchbach threw me my shoes, and I got into them with great effort. My feet were swollen, my legs black and blue; the welts on my knees were clotted with blood. The inspector watched me gravely.

"Remember, this is nothing, professor," he said. "As I've already warned you, I have far more interesting things in store for you, things you cannot even imagine. However, to get back to your students. Do you know what? They actually told us about your research magnificent. Imagine anyone in the twentieth century looking for the good, the true and the beautiful! They should have buried you long ago, professor, together with your amoeba, Amos and the rest of it. The whole business was nothing more than the immemorial arrogance of the apostle. You savants, scribblers, daubers and self-appointed philosophers have become positively disgusting with your sermons on liberty. Of human freedom, indeed! I'll give you a taste of human freedom which you'll remember in your coffin. From the amoeba to Amos! All you dirty liberals and radicals are the same. You're crazy about the dignity of man. You forget one little thing, professor. The dignity of man is something which always begins as a demand of the weak and always ends as the privilege of the strong. I wish you could see yourself. Who is more dignified at this moment, you or I?"

The inspector patted his shining leather belt and eyed me intently. I was dressed in my dungarees and stood at attention. And now the inspector relaxed and said softly, almost kindly:

"You don't have to go through all this, professor. You don't have to be beaten like a dog. You can have the dignity of man back on one simple condition."

I was on my guard at once, yet could not help wondering what he was up to.

"All you have to do," the inspector went on, "is to write us a letter exposing your father. You know perfectly well he was an

enemy of the Reich. Why not say so? Why suffer for him? He's dead anyway. If you do as I say, you can save yourself without hurting him. Write us a letter saying he was a scoundrel and a thief; say he had Jewish blood in his veins and was in the pay of Moscow. You say it and we'll supply the evidence and publish it throughout the world. Then you can walk out a free man. We'll even give you a job in the Berlin museum; you can complete your work on the Eusebian manuscript. Isn't this a reasonable offer?"

"Go to hell," I said.

Sergeant Muehlbach clenched his powerful fist and started to move toward me, but the inspector stopped him with a glance.

"Hmmm, an insignificant louse and a stubborn one," the inspector said. "Well, I'll be frank with you, professor. I knew damned well you would say no. Therefore I did not waste any time taking the proper alternative. Your father's grave had become a secret shrine for the men and women who had survived Floridsdorf. You went there yourself every year. We cannot permit that sort of thing. We have completely destroyed the grave."

My brain started to go round and round again in circles, and as he moved toward the door of the cell, the inspector's tall, black figure appeared like a flat distorted plane in an experimental film.

"One more thing before I go," he said, opening the door. "We cannot afford to leave the slightest sign indicating where your father's grave used to be. So naturally we also had to destroy the grave of your mother."

He turned on his heel with a snap and left the cell, banging the door behind him.

Had he told the truth or lied? Either way it was horrible. Sergeant Muehlbach stood before me, his brutal face leering with obscene satisfaction.

"Come on, you son of a bitch," he said. "Follow me."

We walked through several corridors and down several long flights of stairs until we reached what might once have been a huge wine cellar. It was well-lit and at the far end I could see a large iron door. Two guards stood on either side of it, leaning on their rifles. Had the inspector told the truth or lied? They were capable of things which no sane mind could even conceive, and they wanted to destroy every vestige of our past. Sergeant Muehlbach was unlocking the iron door of the Big Hall. One of the guards, a youngster of about twenty, grinned and said:

"A new one, eh?"

"Yes," said the sergeant, "a lousy, stinking professor."

The young guard lifted the palm of his hand and smacked me across the face.

"Leave him alone," said Sergeant Muehlbach. "The inspector is saving him for something better."

"What? Schnitzel à la Horst Wessel House? That will be a pleasure."

"I don't know. He didn't say."

Sergeant Muehlbach opened the door and pushed me ahead of him. The Big Hall was dark. At the far end I could see the only window in the room, blockaded with flat iron crossbars and barbed wire, and through it the prison searchlight sweeping arcs of light across the darkness outside. The silence in the room was even more oppressive than the dank air. It was not at all what I had expected. There seemed to be not a living soul in the place. The sergeant, walking ahead of me, turned his flashlight on and I was able to make out sleeping bunks to the left and straight ahead rising three tiers toward the ceiling. The new figures visible in the circle of light which came from the sergeant's flash had their backs turned toward us and did not stir. Sergeant Muehlbach found an empty lower bunk and ordered me into it. I crawled under the blanket without undressing, stretched out along the straw pallet and watched the retreating apelike figure of the sergeant, moving across the Big Hall like a shadow in the heavy night. He closed the door behind him and I heard the lock scraping as it shut. Then the darkness was filled with the breathing of men, and near by several voices whispered softly, but I could not make out what they said.

This was to be my new home, and around me, invisible and mysterious, were my new companions. All my senses were bruised and exhausted. I fell asleep at once.

It took me nearly a month to become accustomed to the routine of the Big Hall. There were a hundred of us and during the day we barely exchanged a word of greeting. That was the accepted code among the prisoners, and its purpose was obvious.

From the start I was surprised to see many people I had known casually in Vienna—workers from Floridsdorf, men who had collaborated with my father on *The Future*, several colleagues from my own university; some liberal journalists, doctors and lawyers; several painters and writers; two or three Jews I had met at the home of Professor Gross; three Social Democrats who used to sit in the Chamber of Deputies when Austria still had a parliament. All these pretended they had never seen me before.

The same was true of the four men I knew best among the prisoners. I recognized them the first morning, when I was awakened at dawn by the shrill whistle of Sergeant Muehlbach and the shouting of the guards, and clambered out of my bunk to see the prisoners

around me hastily forming two ranks which ended at the iron door; but neither Kurt Hertzfeld nor Hans Bayer nor Rudolf Immerman nor Janos Vekely gave the slightest hint of recognition. For the next three weeks they continued to treat me as a stranger, though I ate and worked with them at the same table. It was a painful experience, but I understood the tactic and made no effort to approach them.

The routine of the Big Hall was that of most Nazi concentration camps. At dawn we were marched up and down dusty stairways into the courtyard for a dose of old-fashioned Prussian military drill. The first moment I stepped out of the prison walls into the open air was so extraordinary that I nearly forgot my surroundings. My eyes blinked in the sun and looked up with joy into the blue skies which I had not seen for eons. The real world was still there. The glories of nature were in their eternal place. It was summer already. Under the eaves birds were singing. Yes, even in this dank hellhole, their song floated through the golden sunlight which fell upon the stone walls and the wide earth of the courtyard. But all this vanished the instant Sergeant Muehlbach blew his whistle and barked his first order. For two hours without respite we were forced to bend our knees, swing our arms, roll on our backs, heave up and down on our stomachs until every muscle shrieked with pain. Then we were compelled to run around the yard, sweating from every pore and panting with heat and thirst. Whenever we passed the guards posted at various strategic points, they slashed their whips and brought their rubber truncheons down on any prisoner who fell down exhausted. Every morning five or six prisoners would collapse; guards would pour ice-cold water over their faces to revive them and would force them into line again.

Afterward we were marched back into the Big Hall, handed some brown, murky liquid in tin cups which the sergeant called coffee, and put to work under the strict surveillance of armed guards. We sat on long wooden benches and did our work on long wooden tables, cutting and shaping leather with keen shoemakers' knives. The leather was later sold to a shoe contractor, and the SS officers of the camp pocketed the profits. Every evening, before suppertime, the guards would collect the keen knives and count them carefully. Later I learned that Inspector Keller wanted no suicides in his camp until he was ready for them.

At one o'clock we were handed a lunch of potato gruel in wooden bowls. This we ate at our worktables. Everything was done in the Big Hall. The sleeping bunks, rising in three tiers, were at one end of the room; in the center were the wooden tables and benches; and if these became boring, you could seek a change by squatting or

sprawling on the stone floor in the large, empty space between the tables and the far wall which contained the one window in the place.

After noon we cut leather again. At dusk we were taken out for an hour of stiff military drill. At suppertime we were handed another bowl of potato gruel. That was all we ever got at our meals, always the same putrid gruel which sooner or later every prisoner learned to eat with a certain amount of relish out of sheer hunger. Man is not only a creature who can inflict upon his fellows cruelties which would make a beast of the jungle blush with shame; he is also a creature who can get used to anything. In the grinding, monotonous routine of the Big Hall it was hard to remember that you were a man once, that you ever ate decent food and wore civilized clothing, that you were free to come and go as you pleased, that even in the wildest fancies of a sadist nobody ever beat you as these monsters beat you.

And during all that drab monotone of military exercise and senseless labor, you were never free of the searching looks of the Nazi guards. In a sense, that was the worst of it. Except for prisoners hauled out of the room on special occasions, the guards seldom beat us during the day. Their orders were to conserve the slaves who were cutting leather to fill the pockets of the SS officers with money. But never for a moment were you allowed to feel alone during the day, never were you allowed to be free at least in your thoughts. The shadow of the whip, the truncheon and the rifle constantly hung over our heads.

But once supper was over, everything changed. It was night outside, and the large electric lamp with the green celluloid shade went on, illuminating the center of the Big Hall and leaving the rest in shadow. The guards left for the day, though we could hear their heavy boots in the corridor, and our rest period began. The prisoners relaxed, smoked cigarettes, played cards and talked. Most of us were politicals, and there was a good deal of talk about politics. Amusement was furnished chiefly by a group of ten men whose presence in the Big Hall has remained a mystery for me to this day. They were not political prisoners in any sense, but common criminals, thieves, forgers, kidnapers and murderers who for some reason had been thrown into our midst. Afterward, when I became more intimate with other politicals, I discovered that they were just as puzzled by the presence of these criminals as I was. There were a number of theories, but nobody was really sure. Some thought that these thieves and killers had been planted there to spy on us; but even the exponents of this guess had to admit it was very weak. The criminals were part of our prison society and we treated them as such. Hans Bayer gave them the same cigarette rations as the

politicals, and Immerman even tried to interest them in political questions, to "save their souls," as he liked to say ironically. But *there was nothing a political would tell a criminal which could be of the slightest use to Inspector Keller in his relentless hunt for information about our alleged secret connections with the outside world.*

Furthermore, it was a remarkable thing that not once was any criminal taken out for a beating by the guards. These grizzled, hard-faced robbers and mankillers with eyes which were at once naïve and cunning, like those of beasts of prey, were allowed a good deal of freedom. They used to insult the guards, and even Sergeant Muehlbach himself, in the colorful lingo of the underworld, and were never punished for it. The guards even laughed at the boastful insolence of the criminals. But woe to any political who dared to join in the laughter. For that the guards left you on the floor completely senseless, your face yellow, blue and green with marks of whip and truncheon.

At the end of the month, however, when Kurt felt it safe to resume his friendship with me in this hellhole, he explained the presence of the criminals in a way that seemed to make sense, at least in those surroundings where all values were transvalued as in a nightmare. He said the inspector had herded these common criminals into the Big Hall with us to show that the "new order" was forever done with an old European tradition. It refused to make any distinctions between criminals and politicals. Quite the contrary: it considered the robber and the murderer superior to the radical, the liberal, the intellectual and the Jew, and therefore treated him with greater lenience.

Lenience was the last thing a political could expect. The night of long knives began every evening after supper. The prisoners would smoke and talk around the long wooden tables and on the floor of the hall at the farther side, and suddenly the guards would enter and drag out several men through the iron door. Sergeant Muehlbach's torture chamber was at the far end of the corridor outside, but through the closed door of our pen we could hear the agonized screams of the victims. It was something you never got used to. We had all gone through the hands of the Nazis; we had all seen and experienced the refinements of their cruelty; there were some of us who had been on the point of death and were moving through a faded world like ghosts miraculously returned from the grave; yet every time we heard a fellow prisoner wailing inhumanly under inhuman torture, the faces in the Big Hall would grow pale and grim, and the eyes of tenscore men would fill with terror or indignation.

Sometimes the victims were hauled back into the Big Hall and in our presence thrown into their beds like limp blood-soaked rags. At other times they disappeared for days, and we knew they were either in solitary confinement or in the "repair shop," as the infirmary was called. These men did not always come back. Some bled to death under the truncheon and the whip; others killed themselves by breaking the window in the cell and cutting their wrists, or strangling themselves with their shirts, or smashing their heads against the wall. Most of these were what used to be called intellectuals. It is a fact worth noting that there were few suicides among the workers; they seemed to have a greater assurance about the world and its future, and greater stoicism in the face of terror.

When a prisoner returned from Sergeant Muehlbach's torture chamber, he seldom discussed the agonies he had endured. He would simply use the prison argot to indicate the particular form of cruelty applied to him. He would say: Schnitzel à la General-Pape-Strasse or à la Maykowski House, SA-Kaserne Wicherstrasse, Columbia House, Oranienburg, Hamburger Stadthaus, Dachau, Horst Wessel House or Sonnenburg. They would say that and everyone understood. Those were the names of various concentration camps throughout the Reich from which Inspector Keller had copied the most gruesome tortures of the body. It was only in twisting a prisoner's soul to the very edge of death that the elegant inspector prided himself on any originality.

What the physical tortures were like is already known to the world. At least they ought to be. The records are available. But who knows? Has time obscured these things also? Perhaps we who endured a thousand hells at the hands of the world's common enemy and were certain that the world would never forget or forgive these crimes—perhaps we were mistaken. In those days a sacred, universal war against evil had not yet intervened to render our sufferings trivial; the shedding of innocent blood was not taken wholly for granted; everything was new, therefore shocking. Though we had heard of these things and experienced them across five long years, it was still startling to know that a liberal journalist had been driven stark naked across the courtyard at night with a fierce police dog baying at his heels and a hunting party of SS guards firing rifles at his head as if he were an animal in the forest. It was still shocking to know that the night before a Catholic worker once active in the Floridsdorf trade-unions had been forced to kneel for three hours on a rifle, with a thick rope around his neck and rubber truncheons smashing steadily against his spine until he collapsed in a pool of blood. And it still seemed gruesome when a Jew had just been beaten

senseless; and when he at last revived and begged his tormentors for water, they forced him to drink a bowl of iodine.

Sometimes the cries of the victims were so loud and so terrible that the guards would come into the Big Hall and order us to sing. That was the last thing we felt like doing, but sing we had to; yet in spite of their absolute power over us, the prison authorities were afraid to let things go too far, lest too great a desperation goad us into murdering some of them or into open revolt.

Hate, terror and madness filled every crevice of that prison, but there was method there as well. It wasn't only for sadistic pleasure that we were dragged out of the Big Hall during the rest period, and sometimes in the dead of night, to be ground through tortures which the devil himself in the lowest reaches of hell had never dreamed of in his most evil moments. Nor was it only to punish us for our stubborn opposition to Hitler's "new order." From his office in another part of the prison Inspector Keller directed the torments with one end in view. Over and over again, often thirty and forty times in an hour, the prisoner would be bombarded with the same relentless questions:

"What do you know about the Underground? Who is on the secret committee which runs your secret prison organization? What connections have you with the outside world?"

If there was any secret organization and if it did have connections with the outside world, not a single prisoner seemed to know anything about it. At least nobody told the inspector anything.

From the beginning I found a place at the table with the men I had known best in Vienna in the days when this nightmare was the last thing we had expected. Next to me sat Kurt Hertzfeld, still young despite his suffering, still warm and sensitive to all, yet somehow changed, too. At the head of the table sat Hans Bayer, silent and reserved as a rule, his keen gray eyes seeing everything, his iron will pervading the room. Along the table sat a number of prisoners I did not know; but at the other end, facing Hans Bayer, sat Janos Vekely, the forgotten hero of the forgotten Hungarian republic; and, next to him, Rudolf Immerman, whom I had met long ago in my father's office at *The Future*. Both men had often stayed at my apartment during their visits to Vienna in an age that already seemed older than the paleolithic.

These four men, part of my father's dream and of my own youth, acted as if they had never seen me before. Following their example, I introduced myself formally, and for nearly a month worked and ate with them at the same table as a total stranger.

During the rest period, when they talked among themselves, I listened as a stranger.

At first the rest period discussions were mostly about the concentration camp, the internal life of the Big Hall and the relations among the prisoners themselves. Hans Bayer was the accepted leader and his decisions about disputes over tobacco, bread and sleeping bunks were carried out with the utmost respect. It was evident that despite the variety of politicals in the Hall, the men of Hans Bayer's party were in the majority; they were also the most efficient and the best organized. Yet in all things involving the internal life of the hall they acted impartially. This had some salutary results which we all appreciated, as when they kept the common criminals on their good behavior by a fair, judicious distribution of cigarettes and tobacco which Hans Bayer and Rudolf Immerman managed to smuggle in.

Discussions of everyday problems were open to all, and prisoners would come from various parts of the hall to lay their troubles before Hans, Kurt, Janos, Immerman and other prisoners at our table who seemed to enjoy general confidence. These discussions intensified the feeling which had been growing within me that we were all living a life within a life within a life. Outside was the great world from which we had been cut off, with a past which it was hard to remember and a present of which I was ignorant. Within this vast realm of reality was a tiny spot of a prison which had become our whole world. And within this prison were a hundred men in the Big Hall who led a special life of their own.

But soon I realized that even within these walls there was escape neither from time nor from reality, that the conflicts of the past pursued the prisoners into the very heart of their captivity, and that this prison was an integral cell of the great, indivisible organism, the world. For here, common victims of the common foe, all equally in his power, all suffering indescribable torments at his hands, the politicals maintained unbroken those bitter feuds which had divided them for decades and which in this hellhole were pursued with greater hostility than ever. The Social Democratic deputy at our table damned Hans Bayer's party for its alleged responsibility in paving the way for Hitler. Hans Bayer countered by placing full blame on the Social Democrats. And the liberal doctor at the other end of the table, who had despised Marxism all his life and had treated with equal scorn every party which spoke in the name of the workers, now complained that the socialists and communists had betrayed mankind by refusing to unite while there was yet time, and with their joint strength smashing the Nazis to pieces—the very Nazis whom he had not considered a menace until the moment of his arrest.

Nearly every political in the Big Hall evinced a sense of terrible betrayal: not by the common enemy, who could not possibly betray you precisely because he was your enemy, but by allies, friends and comrades, members of the same class or the class nearest to yours in the social scale, a class whom you had damned and double-damned while there had yet been time to unite, but whom you now blamed for not having joined you on your own terms in the struggle against the common foe.

In these quarrels nothing was too remote to rouse hatred or furnish fuel for the most bitter accusations and counteraccusations. Everything was raked up from the past—the Weimar republic, Kronstadt, Canton; the days when the Social Democrats collaborated with Seipel, Mayor Seitz's speech to the workers on the Schmerlingplatz, the conduct of the socialists of Vienna before, during and after Floridsdorf, their continuous appeasement of the Dollfuss regime. Hans Bayer was especially vigorous in tearing apart the "shameful betrayals" of Ramsay MacDonald in England, Léon Blum in France and Noske, Loebe, Severing and Zoergiebel in Germany. But the Social Democratic deputy, an elderly journalist whose eyeglasses had been broken by the SS guards and who could hardly see our faces when he spoke, was not one bit less bitter or stubborn in his accusations. He denounced Hans Bayer's party for dividing the workers, for branding good trade-unionists as "social fascists," for alleged collaboration with the Nazis in strikes and elections, and finally for being "paid agents of Moscow."

This charge never failed to create a turmoil around our table. Russia became the burning theme of acrimonious argument. The elderly deputy exclaimed that the Socialist Fatherland had become the crassest tyranny in the world, not better and in many respects worse than Hitler's; that the people over There had become enslaved by a small clique of despots who had strangled every vestige of freedom; that czarism had returned thinly and meretriciously disguised in the beard of Karl Marx; that the Trials were the most heinous crime in the annals of mankind. To this Kurt would reply in the lyrical vein I had first heard from him in Vienna, insisting the Russian people had experienced the greatest, fullest liberation known to history. Curiously enough, when Kurt spoke the hatred around the table subsided to some extent, and even the embittered deputy listened to him kindly. Here in prison, as in the world outside, Kurt had the strange faculty of softening even the hardest hearts, and it was not only because most people believed that a poet's opinions on politics ought not be taken too seriously. Unlike Janos Vekely, for instance, who defended the same position as Kurt with a violent pride which seemed more intent upon annihilating the adversary than persuading him, the poet spoke without bitterness or antagonism.

There was nothing of the wrangler in him; he did not try to score a point or show up the ignorance and venality of an opponent. He believed something was true and was anxious to persuade others it was true; everything he said and the manner in which he said it made it perfectly clear to all that he was interested in showing not that his opponent was evil but that his own cause was good. As a result, those who failed to see what he saw respected the absolute sincerity of his faith and were moved, if not by his arguments, at least by his genuine desire to win their sympathetic hearing for something greater than himself.

I must note that in discussions of this kind, Rudolf Immerman used to sit in silence at his end of the table, smiling a superior smile as if he knew only too well that it was sheer waste of time trying to convince a Social Democrat or a liberal of anything. Though he was of the same party as Janos, Kurt and Hans Bayer, he never came to its defense. Once, when Kurt kidded him about it, Immerman said:

"Why waste words? Time is on our side. History will settle everything."

At this Janos Vekely gave him a long, contemptuous look. Janos had a genius for despising not only the opponents of his party but its adherents as well. Prison suffering had aged his face, and had given his eyes a look of implacable resentment and pride. It irked him particularly that in raking up the past for munition against each other, neither socialists, communists nor liberals ever referred to the Hungarian republic of 1919 in which he had played a considerable role. He felt that his long experience in various countries was not sufficiently appreciated, and that too much regard was given to the opinion and leadership of younger men like Immerman and Hans Bayer.

It was Hans Bayer, of course, who usually had the last word at our table. His hostility to opponents was relentless but remarkably well controlled. He never raised his voice at any time, and even when he indulged in that vituperation which is inseparable from all discussions on how to make mankind happy and free, it was always with a restraint that was all the more deadly for what it left unsaid. He managed to halt bitter political duels long enough to review world events in a way which showed conclusively that capitalism was going to pieces more and more rapidly, that fascism was growing in various parts of the world "thanks to the incurable betrayal of the Social Democratic bureaucrats," and that Russia alone showed "the way out."

Listening quietly to a discussion of this kind one evening, I could not refrain from speaking the painful and rather confused thought which occupied my mind at that moment.

"May I ask a question, Bayer?" I said.

"What is it, professor?"

The prisoners had heard Sergeant Muehlbach call me *professor*, as the inspector before him had done, and that was the way everybody in the Big Hall now referred to me.

"I am only a liberal," I said, "and do not pretend to understand these things. But why are all of you so chained to the past? Why can't you forget your old conflicts? Why can't we all unite now? Surely the unity of all forces which are against the common foe is absolutely necessary. How can you let anything stand in the way of that unity?"

Hans Bayer looked at me calmly with his keen, gray eyes as if I were still a stranger.

"The unity you speak of is absolutely necessary," he said. "The key to it is the People's Front. But Léon Blum won't let Spain have arms, and the Social Democrats everywhere are sabotaging the People's Front. I have received the sad news that Lérida has fallen, and Vinaroz and Teruel and Granada." Hans Bayer's face became very stern as he went on: "If, heaven forbid, the Loyalist Republic should be overpowered by fascism, whom shall we blame? Berlin and Rome, to be sure; also London, Paris and Washington for failing to send us arms." I remembered at that moment that Hans and Kurt had been captured in Spain and from there sent to this concentration camp. And now Hans Bayer's gray eyes became truly relentless as he said: "But remember, in this story you must add to the name of the Tory Neville Chamberlain the name of the Social Democrat Léon Blum."

There was tense silence around our table; then Kurt picked up where Hans Bayer had left off.

"The world-wide unity of the workers is absolutely essential," he said, looking straight into the face of the elderly socialist deputy. "But we'll never achieve that unity as long as the Social Democratic bureaucracy has the power to deceive the people. In the end, unity is bound to come. By their shameful betrayal the Social Democrats are digging their own grave. They are aiding the very powers which will destroy them. But they cannot destroy the working class; no, not even that section which is blind enough to follow them! In the end, after the chaos and blood is over, the workers will remain. And we shall remain, unhampered by all the old rubbish, to lead them toward freedom."

Janos Vekely started to say something; but the proud, labored style which marked even his most casual utterance was not quick enough for the elderly socialist deputy.

"Lies! Lies! Lies!" the deputy shouted, shaking his forefinger under Kurt's nose. "There can't be any unity as long as your party

is a tool of Moscow, as long as every united front is a trick by which your party tries to dominate everything and everybody! As for Spain, the less said the better. I'd a thousand times rather be in this concentration camp than in one of André Marty's dungeons!"

"I know that," Kurt shot back. "That's why you're here."

"And why are *you* here?" the socialist deputy shot back.

Hans Bayer placed a kindly hand on Kurt's shoulder, but turned to me:

"You can see for yourself, professor," he said. "It's impossible to make the blind see, or the deaf hear."

At that moment there came through the iron door of our hall the unearthly cry of a prisoner from the torture chamber. We all listened to that agony in pale silence; but I could not help feeling even through the agony of the invisible victim the bitter hatred which separated those whom the common foe ought to have united.

6

*So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.*
—Hamlet

THAT NIGHT STRANGE things happened. But there was no indication of them in the routine way we were ordered to bed. As usual, the door of the Big Hall opened at seven-thirty and Sergeant Muehlbach appeared with a detail of armed guards. He blew his whistle and the prisoners leaped to attention.

"Half an hour to get to sleep and no nonsense!" the sergeant roared.

Under armed escort, we were taken out ten at a time like dogs for their evening walk. The latrine was at the farthest end of the corridor, near the stairway leading to the upper levels of the prison, and was always heavily guarded.

By eight o'clock, as the rules demanded, we were all in our bunks. Most of us went to bed in our clothes; we were so dirty, it no longer made any difference. Sharp on the hour we heard the special night bars screech across the iron door bolting us in. The light went out and we were left in darkness. There were a few whispers here and there, then everything became very still and you could hear the regular breathing of the prisoners, punctuated by an occasional groan from those who had recently been through the torture chamber.

Until this evening I used to fall asleep promptly. My long imprisonment in solitary, the brutal beatings on the long table in the inspector's office and the deadly routine of the Big Hall left me exhausted at the end of the day, and I was glad to crawl under the blankets in my bunk and lose all consciousness in deep slumber.

Tonight, for some reason, I could not sleep. Perhaps I had sufficiently recovered from my ordeals; perhaps the clash I had just witnessed at our table was too much. I lay wide awake and the darkness and silence were so familiar that for a moment I almost forgot where I was. Then I heard a prisoner groan. Yes, you really are in a dungeon vile. Against its will, the century has been compelled to bid farewell to its youth, and against your will you have been compelled to bid farewell to yours. What have you done with your life? What

a painless, uneventful affair it has been until now! Don't get off on the Schmerlingplatz, Floridsdorf, Father and Peggy. All that was the suffering of love, not the suffering of politics, which is something else again. You mistook the commonplaces of life for gigantic catastrophes because until you were thrown into this hellhole you never experienced a real catastrophe in your own person.

Good heavens, you did not even have an unhappy childhood! Your parents loved you, your uncle adored you, your friends were warm and loyal to you. There were two love affairs which came to you without effort and a marriage so perfect that now you can't believe it ever happened because you are human and it is easier to remember suffering than joy. And look at your work. When you were a mere snot of a boy, you were handed an important post at the university as a matter of course. Aren't you ashamed of that in the presence of your fellow prisoners? Think of the privations, hardships and defeats they have endured all their lives.

Ah, the penitent nobleman! But that's a pose, too. You're not Hamlet, either, nor Don Quixote. You are just an average college professor, modest and reasonable on the surface, but, oh, how fantastic underneath everything! And you have led a disgustingly pleasant life which the great catastrophe has rendered ridiculous. Yes, everything came to you without a struggle. All the joys and glories of life fell into your lap like the golden apples of some effortless tree which the good Lord planted for you in paradise.

At your cradle stood all the kind fairies and blessed you with the finest favors in their repertoire. Only one fairy was missing, the one who always comes last in the fairy tale, the one who is not invited. But in the end she appears of her own accord and takes revenge for the insult she has sustained. She throws obstacles in the way of the life predisposed to happiness and achievement. This fairy is vital to every man. She compels him to surmount difficulties and thereby lay the iron foundations of manhood. But look, my dear professor! In your case the disgruntled fairy failed to appear. And that was her greatest revenge! While you were still young and malleable, she failed to throw obstacles in your path, and thus she never drove the iron into your soul, she never gave you a chance to become a real man through real suffering. You went through life thinking you were hot in pursuit of truth, when you were only abandoning yourself to pleasant dreams and toying with ideas which were no more than lucky adventures and fortuitous inspirations. But cheer up! Finally the disgruntled fairy has arrived. She has thrown you into this dungeon utterly unprepared, and her triumph is complete, her revenge truly terrible. At the same time she accomplishes her remote task, too. She hands you suffering and salvation on the same bloody platter.

Your great opportunity has come. If you can resist all this, if you can survive and surmount the horrors around you, then at last you may be a man, at last you may be of some use to the world.

Lost in this reverie of self-reproach and renewed hope, I suddenly heard strange noises. I looked out of my bunk, and there in the darkness of night saw the Big Hall come astonishingly alive. Shadowy figures crawled out of their bunks and scattered themselves in various parts of the huge room. Someone struck a match; a candle flared up on the stone floor near the threshold; a hidden life, of which I had known nothing at all, appeared in the surrounding shadows.

From my bunk I could see several things distinctly. Three prisoners, fully dressed, were standing sentry at the iron door, listening to every sound which might come from the corridor. On the floor near the threshold, squatting in a circle around the candle, were the common criminals passing out the first hand in a game of cards. Far downhall, toward the most remote wall from our sleeping quarters, a stream of golden candlelight cut the shadows, and in the surrounding gloom several crouching figures were visible. Most of the prisoners were asleep in their bunks; only a small group had ventured out into the enormous room. I crawled out of my bunk and listened. The hum of voices was very faint, but suddenly, at my very elbow, a familiar voice said clearly:

"Is that you, Paul? My, it's good to see you!"

Kurt was lying in the bunk next to mine, watching me intently. I had long ago noticed that nothing separated the cots except a thin strip of wood about three inches high, but until tonight I had been accustomed to go to sleep first and to rise last, and I had not said much to the old man who had occupied the bunk next to mine. How did Kurt get here?

Kurt climbed out of his cot, handed me a cigarette and lit one himself.

"I moved in here tonight," he said. "At last we've got a chance to resume our meetings. How are you?"

"Alive, that's about all."

"That's a lot these days. How are all our friends in Vienna?"

"You know what happened to Vienna, or don't you?"

"I do. I guess that answers my question."

"What's going on here?" I said.

"This? Our real life. We gather a small group together every night and give them a little political education. The work must go on even here. You understood why we had to treat you as a stranger until now?"

"Perfectly."

"No, no, it wasn't only because you are a new prisoner," Kurt said quickly. "Our secret organization has had some trouble. The inspector gave us a real scare just before you came here."

The summer heat filled the stone room oppressively. It was like a sweatbox and I felt the drops of perspiration rolling down my back.

"Why does the inspector keep torturing us for information?" I asked.

"He wants something the prisoners can't tell him," Kurt said. "Our connections with the Underground outside. Berlin considers our nightly meetings here small potatoes. They want to catch the Underground throughout the Reich and crush it."

"And not a single prisoner has cracked?"

"Our boys don't crack easily," Kurt said with pride. "And if they wanted to, they couldn't tell the inspector what he wants to know. Only one man has direct connections with the outside, and he won't tell the basic secrets to anybody, not even us."

"Hans Bayer?"

"Hans is head and shoulder above the rest of us," Kurt said, and again there was a note of pride in his voice. "The prisoners elected him leader the first day he arrived here."

"But how on earth . . ."

"You are wondering how Hans Bayer can keep in touch with the outside," Kurt smiled, but there was a strange, cutting edge in his voice. "I'm surprised at you, Paul. The concentration camp has been in business for five years and there's quite a literature about it, and you are supposed to be an educated man."

It was at this moment that I first realized, albeit vaguely, the nature of the change I had already sensed in Kurt. Time, war and imprisonment had added or evoked a new ingredient in his affectionate nature. Misfortune had salted lyricism with satire. The face of Shelley was still there, but the eyes already had a glint of Heine.

"You mean bribing the guards?" I said.

"Yes. The Fuehrer has ushered in the era when blood conquers money. The SS interprets that in a simple way. It sheds our blood and takes our money. There's not a camp in the whole Reich where you can't bribe a few guards. But we don't rely wholly on that. We have our own people among them."

"You mean one of those boys standing outside that door with a rifle or beating the hell out of us in the torture chamber is a comrade?"

"One and maybe two, but who they are only Hans Bayer knows, and he won't tell a soul."

The criminals near the door were laughing softly as one of them raked in a small pile of coin across the stone floor. Their faces looked more weird than ever in the candlelight. Kurt saw me watching them.

"They can be bribed, too," he said. "How they love to be bribed! And they're damned useful. So far our sentries have been able to warn us in time whenever they heard boots approaching too near the door. But suppose some night they are too slow, or Sergeant Muehlbach is too quick. Then the criminals stand up and begin to quarrel over their card game at the top of their voices. The sergeant's attention is concentrated on them while we slip back into our bunks. He has nothing but a case of broken discipline on his hands, among the men he is least anxious to punish. They get off with a lot of filthy abuse and meantime we all safely crawl under our blankets." He laughed softly and added, again with profound pride in his friend: "That was Hans Bayer's idea. By the way, Hans is anxious to have you at tonight's meeting. There's something special he wants you to do. It's our first meeting in a month since the executions."

"What executions?"

"Here's the setup," Kurt said. "This prison camp consists of three buildings divided by two great courtyards. We are in the center. Each of the buildings has a number of halls like ours, and each of these has its own local organization among the prisoners. We've worked out a perfect grapevine, and Hans is the leader of all the nine thousand prisoners in the entire camp. Hans works in the most cautious obscurity through a complex system of relays. In this hall, for example, only Janos Vekely, Immerman, myself and now you know the real role that Hans Bayer plays. But the inspector seems to be making some shrewd and dangerous guesses. Until a month ago, just before you came here, we used to hold group meetings nearly every night. Suddenly the inspector cracked down on the entire prison in a fantastic way. He *is* a fantastic creature, isn't he? Do you know what he did? He seized several leading prisoners in the west building, the one to our right, and threw them into solitary. Then, overnight, the prisoners were compelled to erect a scaffold in the next courtyard. The following dawn all three thousand prisoners of the west building were hauled out into the yard and compelled to witness the execution of their leaders. The grapevine relayed the news to us at once. It seems to have been a pretty horrible affair even for a Nazi camp. Apparently, the inspector hoped the executions would frighten some prisoners into squealing. He failed; nobody talked. Just the same, Hans Bayer decided to be careful for a while. We stopped all meetings and treated all new prisoners with

the greatest caution. For the sake of morale, we could not make any exceptions, not even you. But now things seem to have quieted down. The beatings have subsided a little, and this morning a prisoner whom we knew to be a spy was transferred to another hall, so Hans decided to resume the meetings."

"Who was the spy?" I said.

"The old man who occupied the bunk I have just appropriated," Kurt said.

"What! that nice old man?"

"There you are," said Kurt; "you can never tell who is a spy until he's exposed."

Kurt and I joined the circle around the candle at the other end of the room. The ceiling of the Big Hall was very high, and the dim light only increased the surrounding gloom. But it made the faces of the prisoners around me stand out very clearly. There were about twenty men seated on the floor with Hans Bayer, Rudolf Immerman and Janos Vekely as a center. Hans was talking to the group in a low, firm voice, and seemed to be winding up a political report. The circle seemed very small against the enormous room, and everything at the other end—the long wooden tables, the bunks, the iron door, our sentries, the card game of the criminals—everything appeared far away, almost like another world. As I sat down in the circle near Kurt, several prisoners smiled to me in a friendly way, Immerman and Janos among them. Hans Bayer leaned over, shook hands gravely, then said to the group:

"You all know Professor Schuman. We are fortunate to have him with us tonight." He put his hand inside his blue dungaree coat and drew out a newspaper folded very small. "I have here," he said, "a fairly recent issue of a Tory newspaper from London. I hope nobody is going to ask where I got it." The prisoners smiled. "The fact is, I bought it with my own good money at the kiosk near the subway station just outside the latrine." The prisoners laughed softly. "I have marked several items which I would like Professor Schuman to translate for us. Of course, a Tory newspaper sometimes distorts what is really going on in the world. But with the help of the dialectic, we can easily decipher the actual facts."

Hans Bayer unfolded the English newspaper and handed it to me. It was the first printed matter I had seen since my arrival at the camp, and a profound thrill surged through my being. The broiling-hot room became silent as I glanced at the marked items. The prisoners leaned forward attentively. I could not help being impressed by the unbending hope of these men which persisted despite all their differences, arguments and quarrels. Right here in the prison camp, under the whips and guns of the enemy, they continued

to fight him. They had perfected a complete organization which governed the lives of the prisoners far more deeply than did the guards. They received and disseminated news from the outside world and conducted study groups. And they inspired each other with faith and hope in the future of whose inevitable triumph they were sublimely certain. I felt like a new man as I slowly translated the marked items from the English newspaper. Here was the outside world with us inside these hot stone walls. When I had finished my task, Hans Bayer looked around the circle and said slowly:

"There is only one conclusion we can draw from the Ciano-Perth Accord of April 16, and from Neville Chamberlain's persistence in licking Tokyo's boots. The news we have just heard confirms my worst fears. The suicidal policy of appeasement goes right on in spite of everything. You see that immediately after the Nazis seized Vienna, Litvinov warned the democratic nations that Czechoslovakia is next on Hitler's list. He proposed a conference of the League of Nations and the United States to consider collective security. His exact words were: to consider collective means of 'checking the further development of aggression and eliminating an aggravated danger of a new world massacre.' Don't forget those words. London declined Litvinov's proposal. What does that mean? It means Czechoslovakia will be thrown as one more sop to Hitler. It also means that the danger of a new world massacre is more aggravated than ever."

Hans Bayer lit a cigarette and the light of the match revealed more clearly the strong lines of his face. Several of the prisoners lit pipes.

"I guess that's all for tonight," Hans said, looking around the circle. "See you all in a week."

Some fifteen prisoners rose from their places on the stone floor, said good night quietly and started off for their bunks. Hans Bayer, Janos Vekely, Rudolf Immerman and Kurt Hertzfeld remained seated. I rose to go, but Hans stopped me.

"Sit down, professor," he said kindly. "We have lots of time and no place to go. How are you?" He hesitated a moment, as if about to ask some important question, but thought better of it. "Well, never mind. You're like the rest of us. Keep your chin up, professor."

He leaned over and slapped me on the back, and from him I knew that was a very warm greeting. Janos Vekely shook hands with me formally and said he was very happy to see me even under these unhappy circumstances, and that he always remembered my father with great affection. Immerman smiled vaguely and said hello, how are you. Hans now turned to him and said in a businesslike voice:

"A prisoner assigned to tomorrow night's study group died in the infirmary yesterday. See that he is replaced from another group."

"I've done that already," said Immerman.

"Good," said Hans, with a sense of confidence and pride in Immerman's efficiency. "And the cigarette supply?"

"Our guard has promised to give it to me in the latrine tomorrow night," Immerman said.

"Good," said Hans. Then, turning to me: "Immerman is our Schieber, and a damned good one, too. He fixes the guards to smuggle in tobacco and soap and smuggle out letters. If you want to write home, give the letter to him."

"Thanks," I said, "I will."

We were all smoking now, and a sense of relaxation came over us; but I noticed that even when he was relaxed, Janos Vekely's face smoldered with a strange, nameless pride and resentment. He seemed to be irreconcilably angry with himself and with the world, and never for a moment did he take his keen, critical eyes off Hans Bayer.

"And now, my dear professor," said Hans, "how do you like this place?"

"I've seen better," I said.

Everyone smiled except Janos.

"Our friend Kurt here," Hans Bayer went on, "calls this the Inferno. You know: abandon all hope ye who enter here."

"No, no," Kurt said to him, smiling. "Unlike Dante's Inferno, this one breeds hope. Who of us really believes this is the end? A change must come. We are bound to be free again."

"I suppose Hans Bayer will get us out of here," said Janos suddenly, in a bitter voice.

Hans lowered his eyes and did not reply. The atmosphere became unpleasant. Apparently the hatred of the victims for each other hovered not only over the rim of our prison society but had reached its very core. I felt a compulsion to change the subject as quickly as possible.

"You still cling to Dante in his hellhole?" I said to Kurt.

"Yes, but not in the old way," Kurt said. "I've been doing a lot of thinking in this camp. I've been trying to figure out how we got here after a century of hope and struggle for something quite different, and I've come to the conclusion that world history is the greatest of poets. It has succeeded in parodying not only a fantasy-monger like Octave Mirbeau but even a sublime genius like Dante Alighieri."

"Hmm, world history, no less," said Immerman dryly.

"I don't mean conventional history at all," said Kurt earnestly. "The historians have approached the problem of man the wrong

way. They are all bitten by the materialism and determinism of the nineteenth century. They all think man's destiny is wholly a matter of economics."

"Don't you?" said Janos sharply. "Are you repudiating the faith—here of all places, and now of all times?"

Hans Bayer winked at me gravely but said nothing.

"Certainly not!" Kurt exclaimed with warm indignation. "You know damned well that the Founding Fathers had to emphasize the main principle—which is economics—in opposition to their adversaries who denied it. They did not have the time, the place or the opportunity to allow the other elements in the interaction of history to come into their rights. Every schoolboy knows that a great historical event is the product of a power which, taken as a whole, works unconsciously and without volition. A great historical event, good or bad, is a natural process, and moves in accordance with natural law, as Tolstoy made perfectly clear in that famous essay on Napoleon in *War and Peace*."

"Tolstoy doesn't see the natural process," said Janos tartly. "He sees the hand of God."

"All right," said Kurt, his voice rising in tense excitement. "Tolstoy calls it the hand of God and we call it the dialectic; he talks poetry and we talk science; but the general idea is the same. But I'll admit our party is wiser than Tolstoy. Did we ever deny the role of the individual will? Did we ever claim that because individual wills do not achieve what they set out to achieve in history, but are merged in a collective mean, a common resultant, that therefore their value is zero? Never! We always said that each individual will contribute to the end results of history and is therefore involved in it and carries his share of responsibility. And did we ever claim that because in the long run economics molds the great shapes of history that therefore intellectual and moral factors play no role? When did we ever say that?"

"Please don't get excited, Kurt," I said. "I'm confused enough as it is. What are you trying to tell us?"

"I apologize," said Kurt, more quietly. "It's my guilty conscience that is making all this noise." He turned to me with a smile. "Maybe I shall have a better right to reproach you historians if I reproach myself first. Do you know what I have been thinking in this camp? For a long time I've known that my poetry has become the crudest kind of propaganda doggerel. The muse has been untrue to me, I said. But now I ask myself: have you been true to the muse? You must believe in the cause; you must work for it, fight for it, live for it and when necessary die for it. But it is your duty to do these things as a good poet, not as an incompetent politician."

Only two hours ago, I had been reproaching myself ; but now that Kurt was doing it, I resented it.

"Stop beating your breast," I said. "Get on with your bloody opinions on history."

"Put it this way," Kurt said. "Medieval chroniclers thought history consisted of the military exploits of warriors and kings. We now know this was stupid. But are we any wiser when we maintain that history is merely the evolution of machinery? What is the difference whether a man kills you with a sword or a machine gun? Is that what you mean by progress? What is important in a murder is not the instrument but the murder. We have been making the most astounding mechanical progress, yes ; but all we've succeeded in doing is to arm the brutality in man with superior weapons for wreaking havoc. Why, the Nazis are only the logical outcome of the whole basic idea of the nineteenth century! Here is your superman, your ruthless, successful Darwinian individual armed with the best modern technique and still exuding the horrible stink of the primitive jungle. What is the use of bigger and better machines if the heart of man remains evil?"

The room seemed unbearably hot and all nerves were tense.

"What are you driving at?" Janos Vekely said sharply.

Kurt ignored him and turned to me.

"Tell me, professor," he said (even he had adopted that irritating form of address), "do you believe men really want freedom and justice?"

"Certainly," I said.

"Do they?" Kurt exclaimed. He was excited again. "Man has been able to achieve everything he has really wanted. The most fantastic dreams have come true. Man *wanted* to fly, he *wanted* to talk across thousands of miles, he *wanted* to sing over the air and around the world, he wanted, really and truly wanted all these things, with his whole heart and soul. They seemed utterly impossible at first. Yet every one of these things has been achieved. And man has always wanted to kill. He has wanted that more than anything else in the world, and lo and behold! he has fashioned instruments for the shedding of blood which the beasts of the jungle could not imagine in their wildest dreams. In Spain I saw the most terrific instruments of destruction wipe out defenseless cities and kill innocent women and children. That is what man has wanted and that is what man has achieved. But where is real liberty? Where is real justice? If men had really wanted that, we would have had it. No, it all comes down to the heart of man. That must be changed. Man must be taught to *want* that which is really good; he must *want* to do justice as strongly as he now wants to do injustice."

"An idealist," said Immerman contemptuously.

"Call me what you like," said Kurt. "The stick has been bent too far in one direction. I am bending it back in the other for the sake of a necessary balance."

"Kurt simply doesn't understand history," I said.

"Ah, you too, professor," said Kurt reproachfully. His face was very pale now, and his blue eyes were ablaze with a bright, indefinable fire. "No, no, it's you historians who do not understand history. You always write the story of man's struggles as if all the most important things were entirely the result of external forces—some technological change, some startling piece of rhetoric, some villain who upsets the beautiful applecart. But we poets have understood the real meaning of history better than you. We have known one of its greatest secrets for a long time. Aeschylus and Euripides knew it; Shakespeare and Goethe knew it; and the most obscure little scribbler of our own times—if he really has the gift, if he is not merely exploiting the muse as a procuress to get him pretty girls and free dinners at the best houses—even he knows it down deep in his heart."

"What is this extraordinary mystery?" said Hans Bayer, with a quiet smile.

"The mystery of tragic guilt," said Kurt, "the poet's knowledge that when any calamity happens to us we are partly responsible for it. We contribute to it. We call it forth—by our stupidity, our greed, our lack of foresight, our indifference, our eagerness to advance our selfish interests at the expense of others, and even by our sheer childishness. Why do you think we are here? Because the Nazis have seized power? True. But who helped them seize it? How did they manage it? Do you think we had nothing to do with it?"

Hans Bayer rose to his feet. The candle was burning low and its light wavered in the gloom of the huge vault. Hans Bayer's figure looked immense in the shadows. He peered sharply down at Kurt and said quietly:

"Just what do you mean by that last outburst?"

"Don't misunderstand me," said Kurt, looking up at him. "When I said 'we' I did not mean a party; I meant the human race. I am not talking politics but poetry. I am not indicting any group whatever; I am blaming all mankind. And I'm not posing as an outsider, either. I haven't the right to do that. I'm as guilty as everybody else. And I'm not saying this to be perverse or original, but simply because it's true. That is the burden of the poet: to say what all men know but dare not utter, to whisper truths which history conceals."

"Don't take yourself so God-damned seriously," Immerman said.

"Shut up, Rudolf," said Hans. "Let him talk. I want to know what's on his mind."

"Maybe the guards have deranged it with their truncheons," said Janos Vekely.

The most curious thing about these remarks was that Kurt was far and away the most loved person in the Big Hall, and the men who were heckling him at that moment loved him particularly; but it was the rule that no personal feelings of any kind could affect the rigor of a clash of opinions.

"Maybe he's talking sense," said Hans Bayer softly, and it was clear he said it less to encourage Kurt than to rebuke Janos.

Hans sat down on the floor again, and our circle moved closer to the dying candle. "All right," he said to Kurt, "go on spouting your poetry."

At that moment I noticed in Kurt's eyes a look I had seen before in Vienna, and which Hans alone could evoke—a look of affection, confidence, awe and above all a desire not to displease Hans Bayer.

"You want to know what's on my mind," said Kurt slowly, looking directly at Hans Bayer. "All right, I'll tell you what's been haunting me for months. Consider the hundred prisoners in this room alone. There are men of every party, every class, every trade and every profession. Some are rich, some poor, some reactionary, some radical, some Gentiles, some Jews. There are Catholics, Protestants and atheists. Yet they are all in the clutches of the same tyrant. I think of these men—all of us, without exception—and can't help feeling that here we have all of the nine circles of Dante's hell. Here are men who used to be apathetic and indifferent to the great events of the world. They led wholly selfish lives. They ignored the upheavals which led to the catastrophe from which all of us suffer now. The common burdens of humanity did not concern them. Foolishly they believed that by staying out of things, by ignoring the vital conflict, they would save their skins. They were cruelly mistaken. They sinned—forgive me for using that old-fashioned word, I can't think of a better one—they sinned by despising the fate of their fellow men. Now they suffer with the rest of us."

"Just a moment," said Janos Vekely. "I see you've created a mock Inferno in which Inspector Keller can have no other role but that of Satan. Why should he care about social apathy? On the contrary, he must be rather pleased with it. The more indifferent people are to the great issues of our times, the better the Nazis like it."

"Of course," said Kurt. "That's the point. God wants man to be good and Satan wants him to be evil; but when man is evil, isn't he turned over to Satan? That's the whole irony of it. It is Satan

who punishes the sinner for the very evil he wants him to commit. Since we are not theologians, let us say history instead of God. History, then, is punishing us for our follies and crimes by handing us over to the very devils we have permitted to seize and ruin the world. Look at the savants among us, the scholars, the intellectuals of every sort, who understood the real struggle of our times but did not take part in it, who saw the great evil approaching but did nothing to halt it, who thought it was none of their business. Look at the sensualists, the men who made a career of gluttony, who drank and ate and whored their time away at the very moment when the enemy was already crashing through the gates of the city. Look at the men whose chief passion in life was money, who scooped in the marks and francs and pounds and dollars by hook or crook, who sacrificed everything and everybody to their overwhelming greed, who used to cheer Hitler because he was breaking up labor unions, who once sowed discord and now reap agony. And look at the cynics among us, those who faced the prolonged conflict of our times with cheap wisecracks, who ridiculed every serious effort to stem the tide of evil, who found the good cause too trivial for them and just about suited to fanatics like us. And don't forget the men with too much logic and too little common sense; those who understand the past and future but can neither understand nor handle the present, the Savonarolas of our time, the unarmed prophets who are doomed to fail, the men who are sometimes right and always ineffectual."

Strange to say, we were beginning to feel lighthearted. There was something curiously comic about Kurt's mock *Inferno*, which parodied Dante's circle by circle. Yet we sensed he was terribly in earnest.

"And now," Kurt went on, "consider the political killers of our times, the men who shot down the workers on the Schmerlingplatz, the men who fired into the houses at Floridsdorf and said afterward, 'Not enough corpses!'—the men who are in this prison only because they could not beat the Nazis at their own game, because they could not leap into the tyrant's seat first. Consider further the seducers, the Don Juans, the Lotharios, the Casanovas among us; the men who fought against the new barbarism, yet fed it dangerous material by their scandalous escapades. See also the prophets of the future, all of whose predictions turn out to be wrong, the men among us who announced their wishes as facts and whom no amount of error could humble or cure; the alleged experts who used to insist that the Nazis were unimportant, not at all dangerous—as witness this concentration camp. And what about the hypocrites? Look at the men who used to enter liberal and radical organizations without believing in anything except their own passion to be on the bandwagon; who pre-

tended to a love of freedom when they really despised freedom in their hearts; who flattered leaders and masses to their face and ridiculed them behind their back; who paid lip service to ideals which they cheerfully betrayed every moment of their lives. And look at the evil counselors who misled the fighters for freedom with bad advice—of whom the less said the better. Look at the slanderers with a poisonous talent for assassinating other people's characters in the name of high political, artistic or religious ideals. And finally, look closely at the traitors, the men of our times who betrayed their country or their party or their people or their own spiritual integrity for thirty pieces of silver and a political post. Can you look at all this crime and folly and weakness among us and not feel we are partly responsible for our plight?"

Kurt glanced around our circle as if he expected an answer, but we remained silent. The poet passed his hand through his thick, golden hair and said:

"The only catch is that our *Inferno*, unlike Dante's, has a tenth circle. Among us are truly innocent victims, little people unknown to history except in the mass, simple workers and simple middle-class persons who have always led good lives and are here only because they opposed the great evil of our times."

"Then where is your tragic guilt?" Janos Vekely exclaimed. "Surely, you haven't forgotten that! No one in hell, by your own definition, can be truly innocent."

"Well, you know how it is," said Kurt, smiling. "After the irony comes the pity. There is no justice in punishing those who are merely immature, who do not know and understand enough, who have not yet grown up to the demands of our times because their masters will not let them, whose ignorance renders them the victims of the most obvious illusion." Kurt turned to me: "It's not their fault, is it, professor? They deserve some mercy."

"Do you expect mercy from the Nazis?" I said.

"No, no! From history," said Kurt.

"The only being who is both just and merciful is God," I said. "History is only just. In great critical periods like this, innocence may itself be a form of tragic guilt, and history has no pity whatever."

At this moment the candle spluttered and suddenly went out. We all stood up in the darkness. Far down the room we could see the criminals still playing cards on the floor, and our sentries listening at the threshold.

"I think we've had enough for one night," Hans Bayer's voice said. There was a strange note of resentment in it. "Let's get to bed."

The following morning Sergeant Muehlbach marched us down

into the courtyard as usual, but there were no military exercises. Instead, the sergeant ordered us to line up in two rows facing each other. The change of routine was ominous and the prisoners looked at each other in that eloquent language of the eyes which a concentration camp breeds. Then an even greater surprise awaited us. Out of the west building of the prison, there came pouring into the courtyard a large detachment of SS guards we had never seen before, immense fellows swinging whips, truncheons and rifles in their hands. They came on the trot, and when they reached the two rows of prisoners, Sergeant Muehlbach halted them grimly and turned to us. He walked up and down between the two rows of prisoners, peering into every face intently as if trying to discover some secret.

I was standing next to Kurt. Opposite us, a little at an angle, stood Hans Bayer, his face impassive as a rock. In that peculiar whisper of the concentration camp which is softer than a sigh, Kurt said to me:

"What the hell is the sergeant up to?"

"I smell trouble," I whispered back. "Those new guards look tough."

Sergeant Muehlbach stopped in the center between the two ranks of prisoners and his face became more brutal than ever. Suddenly he put his hand into the breast pocket of his tunic, whipped out a folded newspaper and spread it out in the dull morning light.

"All right, you swine!" he shouted. "Attention! We found this English newspaper under one of the pallets in the sleeping bunks. You know this is strictly forbidden. One of you bastards smuggled this paper in. I intend to find out who did it." He looked at his wrist watch. "I'll give the guilty son of a bitch exactly one minute to step forward and confess his crime."

There was dead silence. The faces of the prisoners, green and pasty from long confinement, looked straight ahead.

"How did he ever get hold of that paper?" I whispered to Kurt.

"There's a spy among us, of course," he whispered back.

No one moved as Sergeant Muehlbach counted off sixty seconds. A single thought united a hundred prisoners: Hans Bayer must not expose himself; he was too valuable as our leader; we must protect him at all costs.

"Time up!" Sergeant Muehlbach said, grinning. Then, with coarse irony: "Very well, gentlemen. There is a dirty rat among you. He refuses to take responsibility for his action. So all of you will have to pay for him." He rolled the English newspaper into a club, slapped his heavy thigh with it and shouted: "Off with your shirts!"

We took our shirts off and dropped them to the ground.

"Guard!" the sergeant called. "Two paces forward, march!"

Behind us we heard the boots of our tormentors drum forward twice in deadly precision.

"Prisoners!" Sergeant Muehlbach roared. "Kneel!"

A hundred men dropped to their knees. My heart began to beat furiously. I had never been in a mass whipping before, and acute nausea began to scrape my bowels. I stared down at the courtyard, my shoulder touching Kurt's.

"Kaschumbo!" roared Sergeant Muehlbach.

The whips came whistling down upon a hundred naked backs, and my ears rang with the sound of groans around me and my own blood pounding in wild confusion.

Suddenly there was a rustle at my side, and Kurt stood up.

"I did it," he said in a firm voice.

The prisoners looked up at him. The guards dropped their whips to their sides. Sergeant Muehlbach walked briskly to Kurt and looked into his blue eyes.

"What was that you said?" the sergeant demanded.

"I said I smuggled in that English paper," Kurt replied.

"Prisoners—attention!" Sergeant Muehlbach ordered.

We rose to our feet, and again faced each other in two silent rows which understood perfectly what was going on. Kurt was offering himself as a scapegoat to protect his friend Hans and his fellow prisoners. We knew it was Hans Bayer and not Kurt who had smuggled in that newspaper. I could not help admiring Kurt's action from the bottom of my heart, and in that admiration there was a tinge of envy, for not in a million years would I ever have the courage and self-abnegation to follow his example. Sergeant Muehlbach was surveying Kurt from head to foot. In the opposite row, Hans Bayer watched all this, and his gray eyes shot the poet a glance of warm approval.

"So you smuggled in that newspaper?" Sergeant Muehlbach said.

"Yes," said Kurt.

"You lie. You're trying to protect the real criminal."

"I did it."

"You're trying to spare your fellow prisoners a beating, that's all."

"You asked who did it," said Kurt. "I'm telling you."

"If you're not lying," the sergeant said, "where did you get the newspaper? How did you smuggle it in?"

"I refuse to tell," said Kurt.

The sergeant's brutal face appeared both puzzled and relieved.

"All right," he said, after a moment's hesitation. "I guess you're telling the truth. If you were lying, you would have invented some

cock-and-bull story to satisfy me. Now get out into the center here. On your knees!"

Kurt knelt between the two rows of prisoners, his back bared to the morning light, his eyes fixed on the ground. He looked young and gentle and his thick golden hair cascaded down his wide forehead.

Sergeant Muehlbach counted off six prisoners by tapping them on their naked shoulders. He ordered them into the center and handed them whips which he took from the SS guards. I shuddered as I realized he was going through with an old concentration camp trick: he would force the six prisoners to beat Kurt.

"Kaschumbo!" Sergeant Muehlbach roared.

Not a single prisoner moved. I do not think they would beat any fellow prisoner regardless of consequences, but the last man they could have been compelled to touch was Kurt. They loved him deeply and that morning, by his act of self-abnegation, he had won their hearts more surely than ever.

"Kaschumbo!" Sergeant Muehlbach ordered again, red in the face with rage.

Again nobody moved.

"Very well, gentlemen," Sergeant Muehlbach said. "You six bastards are going to have a little session with me in Surgery." That was the pleasant name by which the torture chamber was known among us—Surgery. "Take them away!"

Guards surrounded the six stubborn prisoners and marched them off into our building. We followed them with affection in our hearts—heroes who were willing to suffer for a comrade, and even more, for the underground organization whose secrets had to be shielded at all costs.

And now two huge guards stepped forward, raised their whips and began to beat the kneeling Kurt across his back. The rest of us were compelled to look on helpless at this agony inflicted upon our comrade. It was a horrible sight, and many of the prisoners had tears in their eyes. As on the first night when I arrived at this camp, I was profoundly impressed by the fortitude with which Kurt endured the torments of the enemy.

7

*So let it be, let it be,
Fretting all the day!
What is this or that to me
Who talked it out in Tartary
Centuries away!*

—William Rose Benét

AS THE SUMMER wore on, Hans Bayer made some important changes in our secret underground organization, but just what they were we did not know. He kept all the main threads in his own hand.

One piece of luck was generally known among the prisoners, however. Immerman, who had been an engineer in his youth, so impressed the camp authorities with his ability to repair plumbing that he was handed complete supervision of the prison in that respect, relieved of the general routine and given the run of the camp. He complained that fixing latrines all day was far more unpleasant than military drill and cutting leather, but we felt this was a fortunate change for us all. An old, trusted party member of many years' standing, an extremely efficient fellow who enjoyed Hans Bayer's fullest confidence, Immerman was now in a position to act as liaison man between the Big Hall and the rest of the prison. Even his weaknesses were of use here. He was a rough, sensual man in prison. That smooth mask which had aided him in his old work in the capitals of Europe had somehow fallen away, and there emerged a gay dog who could tell obscene stories and whose cynical banter amused prisoners and guards alike. Through him, Hans Bayer was able to tighten the Underground throughout the camp, to contact any prisoner whatever and to make new allies among the guards by way of bribes.

We had another piece of good luck in the fall, about the middle of November, when the night watch was changed in the corridor, and the officer in charge turned out to be extremely lenient. Whether he was secretly a member of Hans Bayer's party, or merely one of those rare good-natured fellows which any prison is likely to contain sometimes, I never found out. But we were now secure in the knowledge that as long as Sergeant Wurzel was in charge of the

night watch, we could talk freely inside the Big Hall. We began to meet more frequently in study groups at the far end of the room, and the conversation at the long wooden tables during the official rest period was even more free than it used to be.

The winter which followed was a bitter one. The Big Hall was cold and it was not easy to sleep; the military exercises in the snow of the courtyard were sheer torture. Grimly we went through our monotonous routine, impatiently awaiting the return of spring. I was waiting for something else, too. On Hans Bayer's advice, I had written some letters to Vienna—to Uncle Peter, to Otto and Emma Weber, to Professor Gross, to various colleagues at the university and to several of my former students whom I considered trustworthy. Immerman was given these letters to smuggle out in his role as Schieber, and I was waiting for replies. The winter months dragged on, spring came with a burst of sunlight in the courtyard and the ironic singing of birds under the eaves, but no replies came. Were my friends afraid to write? Had my letters to them or theirs to me been intercepted? Were they alive? That was one of the mysteries and burdens of concentration camp life.

But I had my own private piece of luck just the same. Kurt occupied the bunk next to mine, and we were able to have many talks in the silent hours of the night or at break of day, before Sergeant Muehlbach's shrill whistle called us to our routine. At times, Kurt's talk was a moral tonic, rousing dormant hope, making prison life, bearable, invoking the real world outside with all its possibilities. At other times, he was so preoccupied with the "tragic guilt" of mankind that I became depressed. And there were even times when the basic irrepressible optimism of his nature was itself an irritant hard to explain. This had peculiar consequences. The prisoners looked upon Kurt as the poet laureate of the camp. They expected him to fulfill the immemorial mission of the bard—to keep up their spirits, to lift their hopes high. Most of the time Kurt did just that, and they loved him for it. But there were strange shadows behind it all.

I remember one night we were sitting around the long wooden tables after supper. It was our rest period, and the prisoners were smoking, playing cards or chatting in complete relaxation. One of the prisoners at our table turned to Kurt and said:

"Have you composed any poems lately?"

"If you mean propaganda doggerel," said Kurt, "yes."

"Let's hear it," several voices called.

"I'm warning you," said Kurt. "It's not a poem. It's a popular ballad."

"What's wrong with a popular ballad?" Hans Bayer asked.

"Get started!" shouted a prisoner from the far end of the room.

Kurt cleared his throat and the Big Hall became silent as he began in a low voice: The tale unfolds across the eons, man's stubborn struggle toward the light; the vision rises high forever, and sinks again into the night: At dawn it comes again to haunt us, and wakes us with a trumpet call; the oldest and the greatest vision—equality and bread for all: Barbarians may burn our cities, and despots bow us down with care; the vision stirs us to resistance—there shall be freedom everywhere: No prison can destroy our spirit, no darkness can destroy the dream; for we have raised the generations to fight, to conquer, to redeem.

The prisoners smiled their approval. Several got up and patted Kurt's shoulder affectionately. But I could not help sensing trouble. Was it possible for a man with Kurt's nature to escape it? The danger was there all the time. The aftereffects of solace are painful; it is like waking from an opium dream. After Kurt had recited his poem, we all began to feel rather melancholy and irritated. Our almost unconscious resentment was in direct proportion to our keenly conscious gratitude. We were irritated because the poet had raised our hopes too high. He had reminded us eloquently that for the time being the desirable was the impossible.

At such moments of repressed irritation, we turned to Hans Bayer for relief. Hans was always a tower of strength. He never referred in large terms to the hopes which contemporary history had strangled; he silently took them for granted and avoided the "big words which make mankind unhappy." He was careful not to stress the sublime vistas of a future which most of us no longer dared to contemplate, yet he was full of an inspiring assurance. What was he sure about? We were never quite clear. Hans was not addicted to general discussion. He adhered resolutely to the pressing needs of the day.

In March a profound change took place in our secret organization. Hans took a few of us into his confidence to a certain extent, and this is how it happened.

One night, during our rest period, the iron door of our hall clanged open and Sergeant Muehlbach entered with several guards. The prisoners looked up from their wooden tables without surprise.

"Hans Bayer!" the sergeant called.

Hans rose from his bench and stood at attention.

"Paul Schuman!"

I stepped forward, wondering what this was about.

"You two swine come with me," Sergeant Muehlbach ordered.

"The inspector wants to have a little talk with you in Surgery."

On the way to the torture chamber I wondered about the inspector. He had visited the Big Hall only three times during the past

year for general inspection. Otherwise he left everything to Sergeant Muehlbach. Was this another trick of his fantastic mind? Was he allowing time to soften us?

The torture chamber was a long room with a high ceiling. There were several wooden tables whose purpose was only too clearly indicated by bloodstains. Ten or twelve guards stood idly around watching everything with the hard, cautious eyes of beasts of prey. The most remarkable thing in the place was an empty coffin. It stood ominously in the middle of the room. I had never seen it there before, and no other prisoner had ever reported its presence. It must have been brought there that evening.

Inspector Keller was sitting behind a small desk on which stood a lamp and a telephone. In his black uniform and smoking a cigarette in a long, elegant holder, he looked very much as I had seen him last. Concentration camp life ages the prisoner quickly but keeps the tormentor young. As Sergeant Muehlbach marched us to the desk. Inspector Keller blew a heavy cloud of smoke from his cigarette and smiled.

"Ah, good evening, Mr. Bayer; good evening, professor," he said genially. "It's a long time since we've met. How you've changed, gentlemen! I'll swear, Mr. Bayer, you look ten years older. As for you, professor, those heavy lines around your mouth do not improve your appearance, not at all, sir! But then, perhaps, nothing could improve it."

The guards laughed at this, but Hans did not move a muscle of his face.

"Now, to the point, gentlemen," said Inspector Keller. "You may stand aside, professor. You are here to fulfill the promise I once made you. A little vicarious suffering will improve your understanding. As for you, Mr. Bayer, we have been letting you off easy for a long time. Berlin is becoming rather impatient with your Underground. It's time we solved a few little mysteries."

Hans Bayer stood at the desk facing the inspector, his gray eyes hard and unrevealing.

"Mr. Bayer," the inspector went on, "we know you are the chief of the Underground in this prison. You alone maintain contacts with the outside. Don't waste breath and time denying it. Our information on that score is absolutely certain. All we want you to tell us is who the outside contacts are."

Hans did not move.

"All right, Mr. Bayer," the inspector said. "I'll make you a sporting proposition. If you tell us what we want to know, you can go free tonight. You can live comfortably and even usefully in any part of the Reich you choose—Berlin, Vienna or Prague."

"Prague?" I cried involuntarily.

"Ah, yes, professor," said Inspector Keller. "The Underground hasn't had a chance to relay the news to you people here, but a week ago the decadent democracy of Czechoslovakia became part of the Reich, just as will the rest of Europe."

"I know," said Hans calmly. "Today Europe, tomorrow the world."

"I see you are beginning to understand," said the inspector. "You must realize, then, that in the long run the Underground hasn't a chance anywhere in Europe. Why suffer for something which has no future? Come to your senses, Mr. Bayer. Tell me what I want to know and go free. Otherwise, I'll give you a taste of a little surgery developed in the General-Pape-Strasse barracks which you will never forget as long as you live—if you live."

"I admire your wit, inspector," said Hans. "The idea of anyone being free anywhere in the Reich is truly original."

"I'm glad you appreciate the joke," said the inspector, rising from his armchair. He turned to the guards and said quietly: "All right, Sergeant Muehlbach."

The sergeant stepped forward with several guards, seized my wrists suddenly and threw me into a chair which stood facing the empty coffin and the long, wooden table on the other side of it. They tied my arms and legs to the chair; then they seized Hans Bayer, stripped him naked and chained him to the wooden table. Several guards with wet whips surrounded the table at once. I could not see Hans Bayer's face; he lay on his belly quietly awaiting the inevitable.

"Fine, sergeant," said Inspector Keller. "I'm going back to my office. If you need me, give me a ring. You know what to do."

The moment the inspector left the room, the guards began to slash at Hans Bayer's naked body. I was tied securely to the chair; whenever I tried to turn my face away or to close my eyes, one of the guards would smash his fist into my lips and I was forced to look on. The welts stood out red and green on Hans Bayer's back, and soon blood began to ooze out of them. I fainted several times, and finally lost all consciousness. When I came to, the room was very dim. All the lights had been turned out except the lamp on the desk. I was sweating all over; one of the guards was pouring ice-cold water over my head out of an old pail. Hans Bayer had vanished from the table; and now, to my utter horror, I saw him lying stark naked and absolutely still in the open coffin on the floor. They have killed him, I thought. His body was bloated and discolored by the long beating; his closed eyes were swollen. There was absolute silence in the surrounding gloom. The guards stood smoking quietly, and Sergeant Muehlbach hovered around the coffin containing Hans Bayer's corpse.

Suddenly Hans Bayer's eyes moved; he began to breathe heavily. The light on the desk went out, and we were in total darkness. I could hear Hans Bayer's body moving in the coffin, and the sweat of terror began to drip down my back. Then Hans Bayer's voice spoke in the darkness and it was remarkably calm.

"I'm in a coffin," he said, "so I must be dead. But I hear someone breathing like a mangy dog, and I know it's Sergeant Muehlbach, so I can't be dead."

The light in the room flashed on. Hans Bayer was sitting up in the coffin, grinning through the red and green welts on his face. The sergeant was bending over him, fury distorting all his features, and his right hand was waving a small syringe.

"I'll show you whose dead, you Red rat!" Sergeant Muehlbach roared. He pushed Hans Bayer's head violently against the back of the coffin. "This syringe contains lysol. If you don't tell us about your God-damned Underground, you'll never come out of that coffin alive. I'll blind you, you dirty bastard. Talk!"

There was a brief silence, then suddenly Sergeant Muehlbach squirted the syringe into Hans Bayer's eyes and covered them with a dark brown liquid. It must have smarted like hell, because Hans groaned faintly, then lay still, his eyes dripping wet and tightly shut. After a while, Hans opened his eyes and grinned.

"Another of Inspector Keller's famous tricks," he said. "That wasn't lysol and I can't be blind, because I can still see you, sergeant—and that makes me wish I were blind."

Sergeant Muehlbach brought his fist down with a crash on Hans Bayer's mouth and made it bleed.

"Take this bastard out of the coffin and bring him here," Sergeant Muehlbach said. "And untie that lousy professor."

The guards cut the rope which held me. My arms and legs were limp; my stomach was sick to the very pit. I stood up feebly and watched them place Hans Bayer, still naked, with his back against the wall. It was easy to see he was a very sick man, but he kept on grinning just the same. Sergeant Muehlbach drew his service revolver from its holster, released the safety catch and pointed the muzzle at Hans.

"I'll give you one more chance to talk," the sergeant said. "If you refuse, I'm going to blast your brains out."

Hans smiled and said quietly through his welts.

"Just a moment, sergeant. Before you execute a man, aren't you supposed to grant him a last request?"

"All right," said the sergeant. "What do you want?"

"Before you shoot me," said Hans, "I'd like to get a clean shave."

The guards roared with laughter.

"That bastard sure has guts," one of them said.

Sergeant Muehlbach put the revolver back in its holster and picked up the phone.

"Is that you, Inspector Keller?" he said. "I've done everything you told me, sir. The bastard won't talk. No, sir. . . . What's that, sir? . . . Very well, sir."

He banged the receiver into the hook and turned to the guards.

"The inspector says to let these lousy bastards go. What do you think of that? He says there's lots of time to sweat them. We'll take ten years if we have to, he says."

I helped Hans dress and practically dragged him to the Big Hall. He passed a restless night and the welts on his body broke in several places and he was covered with blood. The next day he had to be taken to the infirmary, where it was found that he had sustained some bad internal injuries.

It was two weeks before he returned to the Big Hall. Then one night he called a meeting at the far end of the room. This time he included only Janos Vekely, Rudolf Immerman, Kurt Hertzfeld and myself.

"I'll be frank with you boys," he said. "They've tried not to kill me because I am the only one who has the information they want. But you can't count on miracles all the time. This time they nearly finished me. Lying in the infirmary I thought things over. Suppose they do kill me? Someone has to carry on the work. I've picked on you four because I know you longest and best of all the prisoners in this hall. I can't tell you everything, but I'm going to appoint you as a kind of central committee. I'll tell each one of you a different part of the Underground's secrets and I'll confer with you on general problems. The fragment of knowledge with which I entrust each of you, you must keep strictly to yourself. You must not tell it even to each other. Only if I am killed may you come together and join the pieces of the puzzle into a whole. Until then, I alone may know the whole secret. It's better that way."

That was how our special committee came to be constituted. One of the first things it did was to evoke a new kind of conflict between Hans and Kurt. This was due chiefly to the poet's habit of asking questions which irritated Hans. The two men collided only once in a while, and at the time it happened I attached no importance to it; perhaps even now I ought to ignore it, yet I cannot help remembering those moments in our conferences at the far end of the hall when Kurt would say to Hans Bayer:

"I favor your proposal, but would you mind explaining how it fits into our general line?"

"What is the purpose of that question?" Hans would rap out.

"I want to understand what we are doing."

"Everybody else seems to understand," Hans would snap back, and turn abruptly to the business in hand.

This would happen once in a while, then the storm would subside, and the relations of the two men would resume their normal course. The rest of us took no part in these conflicts, which we attributed to the usual irritations of friendship. We all knew that Kurt was loyal and courageous; we were proud of his talents and his fine record in the struggle against the evils of the world; we believed in him as much as in Hans, though in a different way. Hans was the voice of our needs. Kurt the voice of our hopes. Except for these occasional clashes, the two men appeared to understand and love each other as in the old days in the outside world, which now seemed so remote and unreal.

Kurt was not the only opponent Hans encountered at our secret committee meetings. There was Janos Vekely, obsessed by the conviction that he understood every situation better than Hans, that by rights it was he who ought to be our leader. Janos fancied himself a man chosen by fate to exercise supreme authority wherever he might find himself; and his rancor was equally great whether Hans Bayer did a job well or made mistakes. Had this rivalry between the two men existed in the outside world? I do not know; but it is a fact that in the concentration camp everything assumed an exaggerated, fantastic shape; molehills became mountains, and differences of opinion often appeared like deadly hostilities.

Between Kurt and Hans the issue appeared to be at once clearer and less serious. It was an ancient conflict, and one which may well endure to the end of time unreconciled and unresolved: the conflict between the warrior and the priest; between the man who rushes upon the obstacle of the single moment in historic time with all his will, intent upon subduing it to his purpose, and the man who sees every defeat and every victory under the endless aegis of eternity. Sometimes, when I thought about these differences, I imagined that between Hans and Janos Vekely the struggle was one between authority and that opposition whose chief desire was itself authority; while the difference between Hans and Kurt was the primordial one between authority and love; for while Janos could never live anywhere in any segment of historic time without being embroiled in politics, Kurt had the assurance of the visionary that he saw beyond all politics. His entire being was alive with a longing for the realm of freedom as against the realm of necessity and he was the kind of impatient idealist who not only wanted the realm of freedom now, but actually imagined that such a thing was possible.

Naturally, Kurt never mentioned such things at our committee meetings, but he sometimes talked about them in the conversations we used to hold in the deep darkness of night from our adjacent bunks. Once, I remember, he got off on a long, vague analysis of an old problem: the one and the many, the hierarchy and the people, authority and liberty, leader and followers. I tried to pin him down to something rational and specific but did not get very far.

"The eighteenth century," Kurt said, "solved the political problem. It is all in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the American Bill of Rights. But nothing much came of all this because the economic problem remained unsolved. The nineteenth century solved the economic problem—in theory. The collectivist idea for democratizing property was clearly worked out. But in our century it ran up against some unexpected difficulties—good old human nature, no less. That leaves a great job for the twentieth century. It must carry out the Psychological Revolution. Science, art and politics must combine to alter the heart of man. This will render effective the political and economic revolutions, and man will begin to get somewhere."

When I pressed Kurt to explain these vague, dogmatic statements, he laughed and said a poet is at his best when he makes dogmatic statements and at his worst when he makes explanations.

One night in April, the various differences in temperament among us came out in a curious way. It was midnight. Our committee was holding a conference at the far end of the hall in the dim light of a candle. Hans opened the meeting with an interesting piece of news. As usual, he spoke in a low, calm voice, as if nothing could possibly surprise or excite him; but we could see from his keen gray eyes that even he was excited by this particular piece of news.

Hans explained that the world-wide anti-Nazi movement was growing by leaps and bounds. It was going to prevent the war which everyone feared. The crime of the Munich Pact would be overcome. France, England and America, the great democracies of the world, would join hands with the Soviet Union to crush the fascist monster; and above the heads of the governments, the democratic peoples of the world were already joining hands for the common struggle. The battle of Spain was definitely lost, but the battle for the world was only just beginning. To plan for the coming year, the world-wide antifascist movement was holding a great international congress in Paris within a month. Liberal and radical organizations of every kind were sending delegates to that congress. It had been suggested from the outside that we prisoners in this con-

centration camp, which was fortunately situated near the Swiss border, should take part in the Paris congress not only by sending a fraternal message of greeting, but a representative as well. It would be a wonderful thing, Hans said, if we could smuggle out a resolution supporting the world-wide movement of peoples and governments against fascism and have it presented in person by a delegate. Such a message, coming straight from a concentration camp and brought by a man who had risked his life to carry it past the barbed-wire entanglements and the guns of the enemy, was bound to have an incalculable effect for good throughout the world.

The proposal sounded extremely impressive, but before we had a chance to give it much thought, Janos Vekely demanded the floor. In that quiet, biting voice of his, full of logic and rancor, he wanted to know, before we proceeded any further, whether this idea had really been sent in to us from the international headquarters of the Underground, or whether Hans Bayer was simply giving undue importance to one of his own flights of fancy. Hans replied quietly that the idea had come from the proper sources outside.

"What did they ask for?" Janos insisted.

"They asked us to send a resolution of solidarity to the Paris congress."

"But we were *not* asked to have that resolution delivered by one of the prisoners in this camp."

"No," said Hans. "If we want to, we can smuggle it out through the usual channels."

"Then the idea of risking the life of one of our prisoners was your own!" Janos exclaimed.

"Certainly," said Hans. "What's wrong with that? I think it's an excellent chance to show the world that the Nazis are not invincible, that we can break through their lines."

"Very well," said Janos. "We can discuss that later. First let's vote on the question of sending a resolution of solidarity."

A vote was taken. The proposal was unanimously adopted. We would send a message to Paris.

"Now," said Janos, "let us consider the resolution to be sent. I have no doubt that Hans Bayer has already prepared such a resolution."

Hans did have such a resolution.

"And was this resolution also suggested from the international headquarters of the Underground?" Janos demanded.

"It was not," said Hans. "I drafted it myself this afternoon."

"I thought so," said Janos sardonically. "All right, read it."

Hans read his resolution. It was typical of the time. Thousands like it were passed all over the world. Each followed a general basic

line, and each mirrored the peculiar character of the place which produced it and the men who drafted it. This one contained all the correct things about the world-wide struggle against fascism, but it also had a special emphasis typical of a man named Hans Bayer who was still haggard and feverish from a terrible beating at the hands of our tormentors. Hans was certain that as things stood in the world, a great war was inevitable; he had said so many times; he knew all the reasons for it and no one could state them more clearly. Yet his resolution gave no indication of it; the whole drift of it was toward a peace which Hans himself knew to be impossible. I listened to him read that resolution and thought I understood its purpose: as long as the slightest chance for peace remained, it was our duty to work for it, to elaborate on its necessity, to stress its possibility so ardently that not the simplest mind in the world could possibly miss the point; indeed, it was our duty to describe our desire for peace as if it were almost a fact, and thereby help to make it a fact. As Hans finished reading his resolution, there seemed to be a tacit agreement among us that it said what needed to be said at that moment by men like us, whose hands were bound to the tormentor's chariot but whose hearts were with the congress of liberation in Paris.

To my surprise, Kurt asked for the floor to disagree.

"Don't you think," he said, "that this resolution is rather too dogmatic in its assumption that war is definitely going to be prevented? Of course, we are cut off from the world. News comes to us irregularly and only in fragments. We can only guess at what is going on outside. Still, considering everything, isn't it pretty certain that war is bound to come? In that case, why not say so frankly? Why not prepare the minds of the people for the inevitable?"

Kurt's speech was greeted with silence. We felt uncomfortable. The poet had violated our tacit obligation to support Hans Bayer's resolution. Janos Vekely alone smiled, pleased with the poet's criticism. Hans Bayer's face became very hard. He was not a man capable of saying: perhaps time will prove my critic right. Men who feel that way, who can see another viewpoint than their own and even take it into consideration, rarely become leaders. When they do, they are great leaders. Hans was just a leader convinced that time proves him right who is victorious. He wanted action, not words. Smiling, he explained with a controlled patience which barely concealed his irritation that Kurt was behind the times, that he failed to grasp the full import of the world-wide movement against fascism, that we ought to disregard his muddled abstractions and get on with the vote.

"One moment," said Janos. "I agree that Kurt's objection is

bad politics. Nevertheless, the resolution is weak in one vital respect. It is too narrow. It fails to place the fight against fascism in its proper setting; it ignores the basic issue of the twentieth century, which is the complete transformation of society on our terms."

"Let's vote," said Immerman sullenly.

A vote was taken. Hans Bayer's resolution was sustained, Janos Vekely alone voted against it. Despite his objection, Kurt voted with the rest of us for it. I was not surprised. Kurt might argue with Hans now and then, but I had never known him to vote against Hans.

Janos Vekely took the floor again.

"You've passed a poor resolution," he said, "but what's done is done. I now propose that we smuggle it out of the prison to the Paris congress through the usual channels. That is all we have been asked to do by headquarters. That is all we should do. There is no use risking a prisoner's life just because Hans Bayer wants to play a little theater."

"You miss the point, Janos," said Hans patiently. "It is important to send a prisoner out. An escape must be arranged. Our delegate must present our resolution in person to the Paris congress. By arranging this kind of escape, we shall show the world that we are not dead, that we are full of hope and battle, that we are well organized, that the Third Reich has its internal opponents, that the movement for freedom lives and acts."

"It's a romantic idea," said Kurt.

"You ought to know when an idea is romantic," said Hans sardonically.

"I repeat," said Kurt calmly, "it's a romantic idea. It will cause a sensation at the Paris congress, but it won't be of any practical use whatever. It will pass as quickly as it came. It will be a futile gesture which will not advance the cause of freedom one iota. Have we the right to risk a man's life for this sort of melodrama?"

Hans Bayer's face became red, and his gray eyes turned a furious green. He started to say something, then changed his mind.

"Kurt is talking nonsense," said Janos Vekely. "If necessary, the individual must sacrifice his life for the group. To serve the group, any one of us ought to be happy to risk his life. But if we are going to expose one of our comrades to the guns of the enemy, let's give him a good reason for doing so. Let him bring a decent resolution to the Paris congress. But this damned resolution of Hans Bayer's . . ."

"It's been passed by a majority," I said.

"Stick to the point," said Kurt.

"Don't warm over yesterday's soup," said Immerman.

"There's an important point we haven't taken into consideration at all," Kurt said.

"What is it?" said Hans.

"You propose to send a man through the barbed wire and the guns of the enemy. Suppose he is caught? You will not only sacrifice him, but you will give Inspector Keller just the thing he is looking for. He suspects we have a secret organization but he has no proof of it. You will supply him that proof. The inspector will unleash hell against us. Our organization here may be completely crushed. We may be killed. Are you willing to risk that?"

"Kurt is a defeatist," said Hans gravely. "What have we to lose? What do our individual lives mean? Is it better for us to do nothing? Shall we rot here in jail like so many ghosts when we have this chance to take part in the struggle for freedom?"

"Vote," said Immerman.

Hans put the question. Again it was Janos Vekely alone who voted against Hans Bayer's proposal. He had agreed with it in principle, but seemed incapable of agreeing with Hans on anything in practice. And again Kurt, who had disagreed with Hans on principle, voted for him in practice. Thus our committee resolved to arrange for the escape of one of the prisoners. He was to deliver in person our message of solidarity to the international conference against fascism meeting in Paris.

"That's that," said Hans Bayer. "Now—whom shall we send?"

Kurt took the floor and, to my utter surprise, he said:

"I opposed this plan. I still think it's crazy. But the committee has voted for it, and in the end I voted for it myself. It is our collective decision and I am heart and soul with the collective. I volunteer to take the risk. I'll make the escape."

"Bravo, Kurt," said Immerman.

"Wait a minute," said Hans, and suddenly his voice had become almost tender. "Kurt is a fine fellow and we all love him. But he is too inexperienced. This is no job for a poet. We need a practical man, someone adroit and daring, someone who will not bungle this. He does not have to be a member of our committee. We have a hundred prisoners to choose from, and if necessary we can look for our man in one of the other buildings."

It was then that the greatest surprise of all came.

"I'll take the job," said Janos Vekely.

Hans Bayer's gray eyes were disturbed as he looked around our circle in silence.

"Just the man," said Immerman. "Can we think of anyone better? He's had more experience than any of us."

We decided that Janos Vekely was to make the escape.

8

*Who never doubted never half believed.
Where doubt there truth is—'tis her shadow.
—A Country Town.*

ONLY FIVE OF US KNEW that Janos Vekely was going to escape, yet all the prisoners in the Big Hall sensed mystery in the air. The complete details, of course, were in Hans Bayer's hands; but this time he took one of us into his confidence. That man was Rudolf Immerman. His work as camp plumber enabled him to circulate freely through the various buildings, to contact other prisoners, to meet whatever guards connected us with the outside world; and Hans Bayer's confidence in his ability and cunning was greater than ever. There was something rather sly and even a little obscene about Immerman, But Hans considered these very failings an asset.

"He's a son of a bitch," he would say, "but he's our son of a bitch."

As the night approached when Janos was to make the escape, Hans threw a few crumbs of information to Kurt and me. The plan appeared to be rather complex, and since Hans told us very little it remained for us to the end a nebulous secret. We accepted that as a matter of course. Kurt and I were considered the "intellectuals" of the Big Hall, and had long been accustomed to leave crucial practical matters to strong men like Hans, Janos and Immerman. However, Hans did tell us this much:

On the night chosen for the escape, at the moment when the guards marched us to the latrine, Immerman was going to repair one of the cubicles where he would take good care to smash the pipes in advance. With the aid of one of our bribed guards, he would sneak Janos into the cubicle and keep him there until the lights were turned out and the prisoners were asleep in their bunks. Then he would give Janos the black uniform of an SS officer, obtained through the Underground; and in the small hours of the morning, when everything was dark and quiet in the camp, Janos would slide among the shadows to the prison gate. At that hour his uniform would be perfect protection. The SS officers of our camp

were in the habit of going to the nearest town for their debauches; they left and returned at all times of the night. Janos would only have to salute the sleepy guard at the gate with the customary "Heil Hitler!" and he would be outside the prison walls. About two hundred yards away were the electrified barbed-wire entanglements with a single gate leading to the main highway. That was heavily guarded and the inspection was rigid. It was decided not to risk a direct exit there. Immerman had made other arrangements. A prisoner in Hall Three of the west building was the camp electrician; he would cut the barbed wire in a dark, convenient spot as far from the gate as possible—this, too, with the aid of a reliable guard. Janos would make his way in the dead of night through that opening and cut across the fields until he came to the high-powered car which would be waiting for him with the headlights out. The rest was Hans Bayer's secret, but he was certain there could not possibly be any trouble after that. With two extremely skilled conspirators like Janos Vekely and Rudolf Immerman, the whole thing was bound to come off.

Hans Bayer's assurance was infectious; I had complete faith in the outcome of the dangerous venture. Not so Kurt. His mind was painfully divided. Perhaps it was his very affection for the men involved, his profound loyalty to the cause, that oversensitive nature of his pounded for years by our tormentors with every conceivable form of cruelty—perhaps it was all this which filled his heart with foreboding. More than once he woke me up at night and from the cot next to mine whispered tensely:

"The whole thing is mad. Hans wants a dramatic gesture. Janos accepts out of pride. The great idea is polluted by personal vanity, and we are all in it up to our necks. If Janos is caught and killed, his blood will be on our hands. And if our organization is smashed. . . ."

He never dared go further; the ultimate possibility was too terrible to face. Yet, when morning came, and we went into our daily routine, Kurt would recover his native optimism and reassure me, as a means of reassuring himself, that everything was bound to turn out well.

At last the night arrived on which Janos was to escape. There was an air of tension around our table as we ate our supper of soggy potato gruel. The faces of Janos, Hans and Kurt were unusually pale. But Hans, as always, kept himself well in hand. Immerman, too, was self-possessed; a tremendous responsibility rested on his shoulders, and it was good to see him calm and casual on the very edge of the great venture.

When our rest period came, most of the prisoners began to smoke, play cards and chat as usual. The pleasant hum of their voices filled the huge room; but at our table a painful silence prevailed. Hans decided it had to be broken; it was imperative to make everything seem normal; even the prisoners must not notice anything was afoot.

"Sing us a song, Kurt," said Hans Bayer.

"What song?" Kurt said absent-mindedly.

"Anything you like," said Janos.

Five men at that table were trying to kill time and distract attention. Would Janos really make it? I wondered. If he got through, if he reached the great international congress in Paris, it would be a wonderful moment for him; all the personal aspirations, struggles and failures of his life would find fulfillment in a splendid act. And for the world it would be a fine thing, too; Janos was an eloquent man; he would tell them what the common enemy was really like; he would tell them, too, of the unbroken hope of the prisoners, and their persistent faith in the future of freedom upon the earth.

"All right," Kurt said. "I'll give you a song written by the famous poet Count von Platen during the republican revolution of the 1830's in Germany."

The Big Hall became very still, and the prisoners leaned forward at their long, wooden tables as Kurt began to sing in a low, clear voice: Come, poet, take a view serener; the world unmoved will see you dead: you know on earth there's nothing meaner than being a German born and bred!

The prisoners' laughter rolled softly through the hall. Then the iron door opened, and Sergeant Muehlbach entered with a detail of guards. He blew the seven-thirty whistle, and they began to take us out ten at a time to the latrine at the far end of the corridor, near the stairway which led out of the cellar. As the first group marched out under armed escort, the sergeant shouted from the doorway:

"Immerman!"

"Yes, sir."

"There's a bad leak in the third cubicle. Fix it!"

"Yes, sir."

Immerman kept his tools under his cot in one of the lower bunks. He drew them out calmly and went outside. When I followed my group to the latrine, I found the floor covered with several inches of water. Immerman was in one of the cubicles fixing the pipes. The prisoners joked with him, and he joked back.

I returned to the Big Hall and crawled into my bunk. From

there I watched Janos Vekely waiting his turn to go out. He was pale, but he calmly smoked a cigarette and talked with the prisoners in his group. Soon they were marched out.

At last all the prisoners had returned. Janos was not among them, but there were a hundred men in that room and only Hans, Kurt and I noticed his absence. At eight o'clock the light went out and our hall was in total darkness. Many of the prisoners were already asleep. I heard Kurt tossing restlessly in the next cot. My heart beat with excitement. Immerman and Janos were out there alone, and one of the guards was working with them for the great venture. I tried to sleep but couldn't. For months, the routine and the torments of the prison had congealed my senses; I had stopped thinking, feeling and hoping; I was half-dead because life had ceased to have much meaning. Now it had meaning again. Janos was our link with the living world; he would speak for us all; he would make us part of mankind again.

I heard the door of the room open, and the dim light of the corridor came streaming in, outlining on the threshold the heavy figure of Sergeant Muehlbach.

"You, there!" he called. "Professor Schuman! Out with you. The inspector wants to see you."

Inspector Keller was sitting behind the desk in the torture chamber. He was smoking a cigarette and smiling ironically.

"Good evening, my dear professor," he said. "Forgive me for disturbing your sleep. I know how it feels. I've not been sleeping well myself these past few nights."

There was something peculiarly sinister in his long, dark face; but there was something immature also. It was at once the face of a relentless monster imbibing blood and of a little boy who takes pleasure in tearing the wings from insects.

"I wonder, professor," he said. "Aren't you in a mood to tell me something this evening?"

Did he know about Janos? Impossible! He was fishing.

"I have nothing to tell," I said.

"No news from the Underground, professor? No cheerful gossip about your friends in there?"

I did not answer. The inspector rose, crushed his cigarette in the ash tray and said suavely:

"Wouldn't you like to be free, professor? You have only to answer a few questions and you can go where you please and do what you like."

"Spare me these sophistries, inspector," I said. "I refuse to betray my comrades. I refuse to serve any kind of fascism in any way. I refuse to corrupt my soul."

"My, my," Inspector Keller said, "what old-fashioned theater. As you please. I've been lenient with you for a long time, but that time is over. What are mere whips and rubber truncheons? Unpleasant, to be sure, but they do not touch you where it hurts most. Tonight I am going to give you a real treat, professor. I'm going to do something for you which will make all the agony and blood of the body seem like a sweet dream. I'll let you taste something you've never seen, heard of or endured." The inspector turned to Muehlbach and said curtly: "Sergeant, take this man to solitary."

As soon as the inspector left the room, Sergeant Muehlbach slipped handcuffs around my wrists and placed me between two SS guards. Silently they marched me up the dim stairway, through gloomy corridors. On the way, heavy silence alternated with sudden cries of the most ghastly suffering breaking out of the walls.

What did the inspector want? Was this another trick to get information about the Underground? What torture did he have in store for me now? What could be more frightful than what I had already seen, heard or endured?

We reached the solitary cell in which I had been immured during my first weeks in the camp. The guards threw me handcuffed on the bed, and closed the door behind them. I lay on my back in almost total darkness. What time was it? How many hours before Janos attempted escape? Fatigue rendered my senses limp. I wished I could pray. I wanted to get down on my knees before the image of the Holy Virgin, as in my boyhood, and pray for the safe flight of Janos Vekely. What nonsense! Yet the feeling persisted. I wanted to pray for Janos, for all of us, for the Paris congress, for the world-wide movement against the great evil of our times, for the victory of mankind over its most tremendous ordeal in a thousand years.

There was a startling noise. Boots approached the door of my cell. Invisible, they marched back and forth with a relentless rhythm whose hollow beat pounded ominously through the night. Time dragged on, and the boots were still there—oom, oom, oom! My nerves were on edge and my brain dizzy with anxiety. Through the small barred window of my cell came the intermittent light of the prison searchlight only to disappear again, leaving almost total darkness. Would those steady, deadly boots outside the door ever stop? Let them come or go!

What was the inspector planning for me? Across the millennia, men had shown an extraordinary genius for inflicting pain upon their fellow men. What crafty trick of the cruel imagination did the inspector propose to play upon me? Ah, at last! The boots were marching away. They were gone. It was still again. And now, in the silence and darkness of the solitary cell, I lay in unendurable sus-

pense. They were preparing something for me; they were coming back! For what? Through my inflamed brain there began to flow the horrors of the celebrated Torture Garden. Lurid, fiery images surged through my being. The inspector was capable of anything. Would they dare to use the hot iron switch on me, heated violently red in the flames of the forge? Would they grip my neck in a pillory as wide as a table, with an iron collar lacerating my throat every time I moved? Would they revive the most barbarous forms of strangulation, flaying and tearing of the flesh, as they had already revived so many barbarities of man's jungle past with the mathematical precision of the twentieth century? Would they rip out my fingernails, one by one, with hot iron tongs; or place me under the torture bell and let it ring wildly over my body until the vibration slowly, pitilessly killed me?

The door opened, letting in the dim light of the corridor, and a guard entered my cell. Silently he unlocked my handcuffs, slipped them into the pocket of his tunic and went out, barring the iron door behind him. Silence and darkness. The hours crawled slowly by, and the sweat of terror washed my whole body. Yes, they were capable of anything. That is what Janos must tell a skeptical world. They are capable of anything at all. Even the most horrible—the torture of the rat? . . .

The thought of it made me nauseous. Then a truly frightful idea possessed me. All the horrors I had just imagined had prevailed in the world before our foe came to power! I was torturing myself with memories of mankind's immemorial cruelty, recorded long before the war in furious satires against European civilization. It was senseless. The agony the guards inflicted upon us in this camp was dreadful enough. They did not need to go back to the Torture Garden to make us suffer a thousand hells a night.

What was this, then? What was I to expect in this hour of undefined horror in which nothing happened and everything might happen?

The prison searchlight swiftly pierced my little barred window, and as it vanished again I thought: what an obvious trick the inspector is playing, the same old trick of the pit and the pendulum! I am to lie here and imagine the most frightful tortures devised by the savage brain of man; I am to live through them in my mind so vividly, I am to be so lacerated by terror and alarm that I will pray fervently for the punishment to come at last and relieve me of the appalling burden of terrified fantasy. That's it! I am to expect everything, but nothing will happen; I am to await a million unendurable deaths the mere expectation of which is to kill me. The inspector plans to strangle me with my own cowardice.

I began to laugh softly to myself, half mad with the ordeal of inflamed expectation, half delirious with joy at my sudden freedom from it; and at this moment the door of my cell opened, and I heard the inspector's voice say:

"How do you feel, professor?"

"Fine!" I said almost gaily. Though my body was exhausted by a year's imprisonment and my nerves frayed by the tension of this fantastic night, I felt calm inside, ready to face anything.

"Come, talk to me, professor," the inspector said. "Don't be afraid. I won't ask you any more questions about the Underground. You know less about it than I do." He laughed without mirth and his relentless black eyes glittered at me through the gloom. "I am here in the role of the Tempter. You are ready to endure anything because, in spite of your follies and qualms, you have faith. I want to test that faith. Do you still believe in human freedom?"

I did not answer, but watched him standing with his back against the door, smoking a cigarette.

"I give you my word, professor," he went on. "Not a hand shall be laid on you tonight. Speak freely. I want to hear how you endure the paradox of the ages. How can you believe in human freedom after the successive failures of Christianity, democracy and socialism? You are supposed to be a historian. Don't you see that after six thousand years of recorded human experience men are still stupid and servile? When and where did freedom ever prevail? When and where was tyranny ever absent? It's an eternal comedy, professor, and it always has the same last act. You ought to know that."

He is trying to murder you with your own secret doubts, I thought. Hold on.

"There will always be fools like you and your friends to dream of bread and happiness for all," the inspector said, "but there will always be men like me to govern the earth. Think hard, professor: when has it ever been otherwise? When and where has the age-old dream of bread and happiness for all ever come to life? When have men like me failed to rule? Surely you are not fooled by surfaces and masks designed to deceive the ignorant many. The strong and the unscrupulous always come to the top, whatever the labels of the moment may be, and the many always grovel at the bottom baking bread for us, singing hosannas to our pride and shedding their blood on battlefields we prepare for them. Was it different with Christianity? Is it different with democracy or socialism today? It's always victory and grandeur for the strong, hunger and blood for the weak."

It's another trick, I thought. He's trying to trap you in some way. Be careful. Better talk, otherwise he will maintain that silence is consent.

"Ah, professor," said the inspector, smiling, "you are a cruel man. I come to you for a little spiritual solace, and you refuse it to me. Please do talk to me; I am bored."

"Bored?" I said at last. "Look what goes on here. It must be a lot of fun for you."

"It was for a while," he said. "But I've been here six years. I've had enough. I want bigger game."

"What game?"

"War. Do you know why people like us must wage war, professor? We make our way to supreme power through a sea of blood; we can maintain that power only by blood. We throw the common man into battle so that he also may stain his hands and his conscience with blood. He, too, must be guilty; then he can never again reproach us. Once he knows what it is to murder with his own hands, he can only admire us for our superior skill in that respect. Yes, I'm waiting for the war whose shadow is already upon the world. I shan't have to be cooped up with vermin like you. I shall clash under the open sky with the warriors of the world, and I shall know the glory of supreme victory."

"Aren't you enjoying victory a little prematurely?" I said.

"Not at all, my dear professor. We shall crush one country after another. It is our sublime destiny to conquer the world."

"That won't be so easy."

"Oh, yes, it will!" the inspector said gaily. His face looked gaunt and hard against the iron door. "There will be little resistance because nobody believes we shall dare to attack the whole of mankind. We've announced our plans to the world, so nobody believes us. And in all lands there are men in power who are secretly on our side. They prefer our revolution of destruction to the creative revolution of the people. Yes, we are going to win all along the line."

"Don't be so sure of that," I said. "The cleverest of plots may miscarry. The peoples of the earth will rise up against you in righteous fury. They will annihilate you utterly. Then we shall pick up the story where you broke it off."

"What story?"

"The great story of man's struggle for liberty."

"You still believe, you poor idiot," the inspector said softly.

"Yes, I believe. If you can plan an evil future successfully, we can plan a good future successfully."

"Impossible. Nature opposes it."

"What do you know about nature? You know only that part which you represent—the most primitive and brutal."

"Sorry, professor; history is against you. Evil always wins. Man prefers evil to good. Man is evil. Excuse the language. I'm only employing your own repulsive moral cant. What you call evil, we know to be good. Man is war, and war is the father of all things. We know how to make war; we know how to conquer. Don't you like war, professor?"

"No decent man likes war," I said. "But all decent men will fight in a sacred war against evil. I tell you again: the whole earth will rise up in arms against your abominations."

"Ah, professor, you seem to think we are vile. But if by some miracle we are defeated, who will do it? Men who are stronger than ourselves; men who can make war better than we can. What then? Where are your dreams of bread and happiness for all? Conquerors are always the same. The men who will take our boots off your neck will place their own there."

"What an idealist you are, inspector," I said. "You are ready to grant the possibility of your defeat only to take solace in the idea that your principles will triumph. But you are deceiving yourself. They won't."

"Don't be so ironical, professor. We are going to win, and you are going to wonder for the rest of your life how we did it. Do you know what haunted the nineteenth century? The mystery of Napoleon, the man who got away with murder every time he wanted to."

"Every time but the most important one—the last."

"Certainly, professor. There is an end to everything. But Napoleon had twenty years of victory and that is what has been fascinating the world ever since. His worst enemies envied even while they hated him. They secretly wished they were like him. They hated him for the same reason that our foes hate us: they would like to be in our boots rather than under them."

"You won't win in the end," I said stubbornly.

The conversation was beginning to be oppressive. Was he simply trying to wear me down into making some damaging admission?

"Oh, the end," said the inspector calmly. "That's a long way off. We are content to dominate the world for the next thousand years."

He was still standing with his back to the iron door smoking a cigarette. My cot was soaked in sweat. I sat up and faced his dark ominous figure, determined not to yield one jot or tittle of the beliefs without which life would be unbearable, and which he was anxious to destroy.

"A thousand years is a long time," I said.

"You ought to know better than that, professor. In the eyes of the Lord and on the vast scale of history, a thousand years is only a day. But for us, what a day! We won't even have the annoyance of all previous rulers. We won't have any critics. Nothing infuriates an absolute ruler more than to say you don't care whose slave you are. You will not only have to obey us, you will have to adore us, too. And in the long run you will adore us quite sincerely because we shall relieve mankind of the terrible burden of democratic and socialist hypocrisy."

"What a lofty moral tone you are adopting," I said.

"You think it's a paradox, professor? Democracy of any kind dooms people to failure and disappointment. It rouses impossible dreams; it fans hopes which can never be fulfilled. It is based on brilliant, alluring lies of equality and justice, but they *are* lies and you know it."

I felt very tired. "Doesn't your bloody tyranny rouse fantastic hopes?"

"No, professor. A hierarchy brings up every man in his place; it educates him to the station to which nature has assigned him; it destroys in him from the very beginning those wild dreams of universal equality and justice which can only poison his life in the long run and render him a danger to the state. Your philosophers claim freedom is the recognition of necessity. From now on *we* are necessity. We are going to make everyone aware of that necessity from birth. Knowing the inexorable limitations set upon him by nature and the state—and knowing nothing else—the common man will learn to be happy within them. This ought to interest you, professor. You are a common man, too."

"Are you crazy enough to think that men can ever be happy under these conditions?"

"In time, yes. Time works wonders. Isn't our frank caste system of elite and slaves better than the continual deception and self-deception which democracies practice? You simply fool the common man. As a boy he is encouraged to believe with all his heart and soul he can rise to the greatest heights; you fan the flames of the most impossible ambitions in him. In the end, he winds up digging a ditch, keeping accounts in an office, or waiting for soup in the breadline. Can you imagine the agony he endures before he gives up the mirage with which you lure him on and settles down, utterly broken in spirit, to the drab reality you compel him to accept?"

"How do you think the common man feels about the despotism you inflict upon him?" I said.

"He is grateful for it!" the inspector exclaimed. "He is grateful because we do not fool him. And he's particularly grateful because

we take all responsibility from him. That's what the common man likes best—to be relieved of all responsibility."

My body was now heavy with fatigue, and my mind bruised by the implacable pressure of the inspector's will. I lay down on the cot again and tried to recover my strength.

"Tired, professor?" the inspector said from the other end of the cell. "This is the little treat I promised you. I call it *torture by doubt*."

"You plan everything neatly," I said.

"Indeed we do, professor. Would you like to hear another reason why the common man will be grateful to us in the long run? He will adore us for ridding him of the Jews. The West is sick of living on the spiritual creations of that stubbornly creative race. For centuries we were saddled with Jesus and his twelve apostles. Now you can't think without running into Marx, Einstein and Freud. So we say: to hell with the Jews and to hell with thinking."

It was becoming harder and harder to listen to the inspector. My mind, exhausted by the perverse, brutal, dominant pressure of his will, sought escape beyond the walls of the cell. Where was Janos? I thought of Hans, Kurt and Immerman. Despite the torture they were compelled to endure, they never relaxed their resistance to the evil which held us in its claws. Then, fleeing beyond the prison itself, my mind reverted to that marvelous summer afternoon of fragrant green trees and golden sunlight on the Semmering when Peggy and I lay in the grass and she read me that passage from Shelley which now rose as a luminous shield between me and the inspector: Implacable hate, patient cunning and a sleepless refinement of device to inflict the extremest anguish on an enemy, these things are evil; and, although venial in a slave, are not to be forgiven in a tyrant; although redeemed by much that ennoble his defeat in one subdued, are marked by all that dishonors his conquest in the victor. . . . And were not Hans and Janos and Kurt and Immerman far superior morally to their tormentors? Yes, as superior as one "who perseveres in some purpose which he has conceived to be excellent in spite of adversity and torture, is to one who in the cold security of undoubted triumph inflicts the most horrible revenge upon his enemy, not from any mistaken notion of inducing him to repent of a perseverance in enmity, but with the alleged design of exasperating him to deserve new torments . . ."

The inspector's voice broke through the silence and darkness of the cell.

"Are you asleep, professor?"

"No."

"What are you thinking?"

"I am thinking that you people will give the world the peace of the graveyard."

"Who said anything about peace? We are going to give the world the blessings of war for the next thousand years. This business of law and institutions is ridiculous. Look where it has led the democracies. Our new order will be a seething volcano of forces in eternal conflict in which again and again we emerge victorious. We are not seeking peace; we are seeking perpetual victory. Man lives on war and must perish in peace."

"Big words to decorate big crimes," I said.

"No, professor. It's our real faith, our religion, our ideal of life. War, conquest, victory! That is the highest law of nature."

"And the deepest tragedy of man."

"War is the salvation of youth, the fulfillment of men. Nations cannot live without bread and without war."

We were back in the same crazy circle, and my brain was beginning to go around. Don't yield one inch. I sat up on the cot again. The inspector left his post at the door and stood towering over me in the gloom. He offered me a cigarette. I refused it.

"Do you think you can impose a fixed tyranny upon the world and that nobody will resist?" I said.

"We are no such fools, professor," said the inspector, looking down on me from a great height. "We expect people to resist. That's just what we want. How can we be victorious unless somebody resists? We shall organize a permanent state of war in which we shall win every time."

"You've said that before, inspector. But you can't kill democracy. It will spring to life. It will fight you. It will destroy you. You are bound to fail because your only guiding principle is force."

"At last you've said something, professor. Force is our guiding principle. The new order will be based on the selection of the strongest. They will attend to everything. Their business will be war and politics—which are the same thing. Yes, we are the men of politics."

"What politics?" I said. "It serves no ideal. It benefits no community. It seeks only, through terror and blood, to maintain power."

"What else is there in life?"

"Now I know you are doomed, inspector. You do not know the most elementary law of history. Only that power survives in the long run which brings some good to mankind."

"There is no good outside of power itself."

"Let's stop this," I said. "What's the sense of this crazy conversation?"

"No, no, professor. You must entertain me. You must talk."

I stood up and looked into the inspector's face desperately.

"Why don't you let me alone?" I said. "Haven't you had enough? Haven't you got other ways of amusing yourself in this camp?"

The inspector laughed softly.

"Why, professor," he said, "you astonish me. I thought you were merely a louse; but, pressed to the wall, you exhibit a few feeble sparks of manhood. All right. If you'd rather not talk this way, I have another idea. How would you like to come into my office and watch my guards break the skull of one of your friends—Kurt Hertzfeld, let's say, or Janos Vekely?"

Janos . . .

I sat down on the cot and said:

"Give me a cigarette."

The inspector lit it for me very politely. I inhaled the smoke gladly and blew it out again.

"That's better," said Inspector Keller. "Where were we? Ah, yes. Tell me this, professor, and answer yes or no. Has there ever been any real equality or any real universal democracy in all of recorded history?"

"No. But there's been enough of it to show us boundless possibilities in the future."

"I asked you to answer yes or no," the inspector cut in. "You said no. Our Third Kingdom, then, is in the oldest tradition of history."

"After your Third Kingdom comes the Fourth—the Kingdom of Man."

"What an antiquated notion," the inspector said.

"Man started out as a beast and has made progress as a beast," I said. "But he *has* made progress."

"And all this wonderful progress finally ends in our victory over the world. Very neat indeed, professor."

"Don't be in a hurry," I said. "You people are going to hurry yourselves into oblivion; your haste will kill you. So will your obdurate refusal to face the most important fact about human history."

"Which is?"

At that moment the prison searchlight penetrated brightly into the cell. Instead of veering away as usual, the light stood still, illuminating the stone walls with a weird glow. I could now see the inspector's gaunt face clearly. He was smiling.

"It is this," I said. "Man is an animal who is more than an animal. He is a creature not only of tooth and claw, reared in the sanguinary code of the jungle and still unable to forget it; he also has a soul. He is the only creature on earth who builds the Parthe-

non, conceives the Ten Commandments, writes Plato's dialogues, erects the cathedral of Chartres, envisions the poetry of Dante, Milton, Shakespeare and Goethe; composes the music of Bach; constructs the railway, the steamship and the airplane; and comes to grips with the problems of poverty, disease and war. He is the only one of all the beasts of the field, the birds of the air and the fish of the sea who has been able to conceive of human justice and divine mercy, and there have been bright moments in history when he has acted on these sublime concepts. Yes, inspector, that is where your whole mad scheme falls to pieces; you do not understand the creature you want to enslave! For man is indeed a special creature, the link between the beast that spawned him and the God he has himself conceived; a creature moving slowly, painfully, but surely across failure and success, hope and doubt, blood and glory from the animal slime in which he was born toward some approximation of his own concept of a being who is all-knowing, all-wise, all-good, all-merciful, all-just, all-loving. Your failure to see this will be the real cause of your inevitable destruction. The peoples of the earth will rise up against you not only with the superior might of their mechanical arms; they will crush you by the overwhelming power of their dreams, for it will be dreams of freedom that will render their arms irresistible!"

The inspector laughed a short, cruel laugh, and his gaunt face was ghastly in the shaft of the prison searchlight that filled the cell. A terrifying thought gripped me.

"What is this light?" I asked. "Why is the prison searchlight halting in this cell?"

"That?" said the inspector casually. "Why, it must be out of order."

The light suddenly vanished, and we were left standing face to face in the gloom again.

"There you are," said the inspector. "Nothing to worry about, as you see. And now tell me, professor. After this miracle comes to pass, after the peoples of the earth slay us to your heart's content—what then? Will the powers that rendered the world a vale of blood and tears for centuries turn over a new leaf? Will they suddenly decide to strip themselves of their gold and glory to give bread and happiness to all?"

"No," I said. "Evil will remain. But the people will have the chance to fight it. That is the virtue of democracy. It gives that which is good a chance to fight that which is evil, and by preaching the good life prepares the way for it. Yes, and we shall learn the bitter lesson you have taught us. It is you, by your vile monstrosities, who have rekindled in our hearts the old longing for freedom. Not

to be conquered, not to be subjugated, not to be enslaved! That is the first step. After we have crushed you will come the second: we shall rediscover the meaning of truth, reason and love!"

At that moment, through the darkness of the deep night, there came the wild shrieking of the prison siren.

"Excuse me," said the inspector. "I think I am needed elsewhere. Do forgive me for disturbing you, professor."

I heard him closing the iron door of the cell; then I heard from the night outside the prolonged blast of rifle and machine-gun fire. Running to the window of my cell, I gripped its iron bars and lifted myself far enough above the sill to see into the courtyard two stories below.

Huge searchlights were sweeping the prison gate with a terrible clarity; they illuminated the armed guards running across the yard firing revolvers and rifles at a figure in black SS uniform in precipitate flight. The man fell near the prison gate and crumpled into a black heap. The firing ceased. The searchlights swept their light away into the skies, leaving the courtyard in darkness. The prison siren's insane hooting died down into silence. Everything was dark and still, and I knew that out there a friend lay dead.

I released the iron bars of the window and slid to the floor on my knees. The room reeled with endless anxiety.

9

A hope beyond the shadow of a dream.
—Endymion.

THE FOLLOWING MORNING, at about ten o'clock, I was taken back to the Big Hall. The prisoners were sitting at their long wooden tables, their faces pale and haggard. The guards who filled the room carried rifles across their backs and heavy service revolvers in their belts. I saw the lonely figure of Hans Bayer sitting on his cot among the sleeping bunks, his powerful head lowered in solitary thought. Kurt was writing at our table. I could not see Immerman anywhere; he was no doubt fixing something in one of the buildings. Sergeant Muehlbach was pacing up and down the room fiercely. Everyone was restless. A number of prisoners lay in their bunks smoking in the heavy silence which permeated everything. I lay down on my cot, lit a cigarette and tried to get my bearings.

The door opened and Inspector Keller came in. Prisoners leaped to attention, but the inspector waved them down with a broad gesture of his hand. A hundred faces turned toward him without expression. From his bunk Hans Bayer looked up and his face was the color of wax. The inspector's black eyes swept the Big Hall.

"Janos Vekely is dead," he announced. "He tried to escape last night. He was shot down. We have just burned his body in the crematorium."

The inspector walked over to Hans Bayer and looked down upon him with a grim smile. Hans fixed his gray eyes on the inspector's face calmly. The attention of the entire room was centered on the two men.

"What did you expect?" said the inspector. "Your organization bungled the job. You threw Janos Vekely's life away. But then you people always bungle everything. And you want to lead the world!"

The inspector laughed harshly and started for the door. At the threshold he changed his mind and turned to the prisoners again.

"You realize what this means," he said. "If I were a simple brute like Sergeant Muehlbach I would take the lot of you out and have you beaten to a pulp. But I know better. I can pick a more suitable moment and more effective methods. Until further orders

you will stay in this hall all day long, day after day. I'll give you a chance to enjoy the pleasures of total idleness." He turned to Sergeant Muehlbach: "Sergeant, remove all guards from this room. The prisoners are to be left to themselves."

After the inspector and the guards departed, the silence in the Big Hall became even more oppressive. Janos Vekely's death lay over us like a pall. The air stank with undefined suspicion, resentment and doubt. Some of the prisoners began to walk around the room in solitary reflection or in silent groups. The criminals started a card game at one of the long tables. Hans Bayer continued to sit motionless on his cot. Every nerve in my body was raw with the weird tragedy of the night. I wanted to smoke cigarettes endlessly.

"Have you a match, please?" I asked a passing prisoner.

He looked at me with withering contempt in his eyes, spat vigorously on the floor and walked away. The unexpected insult startled me; I looked around the room helplessly. Hans Bayer rose from his cot and made his way toward me slowly.

"Where were you last night?" he said.

"In solitary."

"Your face looks all right. They didn't beat you up."

"No. I had a little talk with the inspector."

"Torture by doubt?"

"Yes."

"An old trick," said Hans. "He tried it on me last year, but got nowhere."

"He didn't get anywhere with me either."

"One of the prisoners just refused you a match. He was giving you a taste of another kind of torture—the torture of being doubted by your own comrades."

"Good Lord! What have I done?"

"They wouldn't have shot Janos Vekely unless somebody had squealed," Hans said. "You were out last night. That doesn't look good, does it?"

"You don't think I told the inspector anything?"

"I have complete faith in you," said Hans. "Besides, the inspector would not have selected this night to kick you around unless he already knew about Janos. That was the essence of the trick. He knew you wouldn't squeal. He also knew you would be nervous and would babble all kinds of nonsense which might help him in his war against the spirit, as he calls it. I know all that. But you can't blame other prisoners for suspecting you."

I felt sick at heart. What is more terrible than to be doubted when you are innocent? He who is upright, says the Roman poet, kind and free from error, needs not the strength of arms or men

to guide him, safely he moves, a child to guilty terror and so on. Nonsense! It's the guilty man who can look brazenly into the eyes of his accuser; the same insolence which enables him to commit a crime enables him to deny it. The innocent man wilts at the very thought that anyone should attribute to him the very actions of which he is most incapable; he feels helpless in the face of falsehood; he does not know how to prove the truth.

"I am innocent," I said.

"I know," said Hans. "Don't worry. I'll fix it."

He vanished into the crowd of prisoners, and appeared again in various parts of the room, whispering to this group or that individual. In ten minutes, men were smiling at me. The prisoner who had refused me a match now came and offered me a cigarette, and shook my hand. The burden of undeserved guilt had been lifted and I was glad; then I suddenly felt depressed. I had been saved by Hans Bayer, who wielded prodigious influence among the prisoners. He knew me from Vienna; he understood the kind of man I was; he trusted me. That was a great piece of luck. Nevertheless, my future had rested in the hands of a single man. If Hans Bayer had doubted, nothing could have saved me.

Hans returned and sat down on the cot next to mine.

"It's all right," he said, smiling.

"Thanks," I said. "What are we going to do now? Our organization is ruined."

"Don't be so sure of that. First we've got to solve the immediate problem. Someone squealed. You're out of the question. So are Kurt and Immerman. That leaves three suspects—the electrician in Hall Three of the west building and the two guards we bribed. One of them gave the show away, that's clear. He may not have squealed directly to the inspector; he may have simply told a friend about it—in the strictest confidence, of course. That's how crucial enterprises often go to pieces. A lot of people don't know how to keep their mouths shut. Anyway, we'll see. Meantime keep your chin up. Too bad about Janos. It's a sad business but not fatal."

Hans patted my shoulder and walked back to his bunk. I stretched and closed my eyes. When I opened them a few minutes later, Kurt was sitting on the edge of my cot. For a long time we looked at each other without exchanging a word, then Kurt smiled and said:

"Do you ever think of your old life in Vienna?"

"That's finished forever," I said.

"It must have been fun teaching. Did your students ever ask embarrassing questions?"

"Sometimes. Why do you ask?"

"How did you explain the great paradox of the French Revolution?"

"What paradox?" I said.

"From liberty, equality, fraternity to the Emperor Napoleon."

"There are many explanations for that."

"Too many," said Kurt. He looked around the room thoughtfully, then turned to me and said in a low voice: "Do you believe the individual must be sacrificed for the group?"

"It's an appealing idea," I said.

"Yes. It's appealing when we think of the group as all of us, and of the individual as some recalcitrant egoist who wants to sacrifice our good, the good of all, for his own selfish ends. But that isn't always the case. What happens when the individual is not sacrificed for the good of the community as a whole, but only for the good of other individuals who have gained power over the community?"

"I'm in no mood for this kind of twaddle," I said. "I've had a night of it with the inspector."

"Sorry," said Kurt. His blue eyes became clouded and suddenly he looked much older. "You didn't especially care for Janos, did you?"

"Not especially."

"Neither did I. Just the same we had no right to sacrifice him for a wild, theatrical scheme."

"See here," I said with some irritation, "we're all upset about Janos, but don't let that put any crazy ideas into your head. Keep your nerves steady."

"Sure," Kurt said.

"Above all," I said, "don't get off on vague abstractions. We are not faced with the nature of history here, so you can leave Napoleon out of it. We are a bunch of obscure nobodies caught in a little trap far away from the main stream of the world. Let's stick to our own little problems. We'll be doing mighty well if we can solve those."

"Naturally," said Kurt. "One must always keep in mind that after everything the world is still divided into somebodies and nobodies."

"What the hell are you ironical about?" I said. "I voted for Hans Bayer's proposal because I thought it was good. But you were against the escape. You said it was a mad, dangerous venture. Why did you vote for it?"

"You wouldn't understand."

"Say it in words of one syllable, then."

"All right," Kurt said. "In the end I voted for the escape be-

cause this filthy camp has changed Hans Bayer. He's a different man. I don't understand him any more and he doesn't understand me. Once, in the outside world, it was possible to disagree with him; he permitted differences of opinion. But not here. He feels the situation is too critical for differences of opinion. Things have reached the point where merely to differ is already to betray. He resents verbal disagreements keenly enough, but what he won't forgive at all is a vote against him. The feud between him and Janos started in this hall the very first time Janos voted against him."

"Are you trying to say you voted for the escape out of fear?"

"No," Kurt said. "It's not that simple. It's not like a college textbook at all. There were several reasons why I voted for a project I didn't like. I am never certain about my own practical judgment. And no matter how often they turn out to be right, I never really trust my intuitions. On all practical matters I wind up by placing all my confidence in Hans Bayer's judgment. But I'll admit I'm afraid, too."

"Of what? I've often differed with Hans and nothing has happened to me."

"You're different. You are a friend of the family but not one of its members. You may go with us a mile, ten miles or to the very end of the great journey, and every step you take beside us is so much velvet. I'm a member of the family. For me to drop out by the wayside is treason."

"I've never seen you drop out."

"You never will. I've enlisted for life. But this prison makes everybody nervous, suspicious. We *have* had traitors, and Hans thinks we can't be too careful. He feels disagreement is the seed of disloyalty. I am loyal and want him to know it. I voted for the escape to assure Hans of my loyalty."

"Then don't complain about other people," I said. "The inspector is responsible for Janos Vekely's death and the less we brood about it the better."

But the moment Kurt left, I myself began to brood. Inaction had left me limp. I began to wish for three hours of grueling military drill in the courtyard or the pleasures of cutting leather soles. At first I could not get Janos Vekely out of my head; then, by an effort of will, I stopped thinking about him. I started to count up to a thousand, to recall movie scenes, to murmur passages from favorite books—anything to forget. Time stretched endlessly ahead. How monotonous everything seemed when you did not think; how ghastly when you did. The inspector has threatened to keep us idle indefinitely. You can sleep as long as you like, for days, for weeks.

Sleep, the brother of death, the great anodyne that draws black curtains down upon existence. Through the haze of fatigue and melancholy I remembered fragments of my dead life. Why did Kurt ask me about the French Revolution? I wish he could have read my manuscript on human freedom before the inspector destroyed it. Paris: Boucher: Condorcet: Babette. Suppose while I was walking with her along Rue Saint-Honoré a magician had appeared and through a glass darkly had shown me the future. Suppose he had said: after all your hopes of freedom you will lie in chains, the most miserable and degraded of slaves. Would I have believed him? I am an invisible atom in history, one of the trillion nobodies, and I have long ago stopped thinking of history. Where, oh, where is M. Condorcet? Quit these crazy thoughts. Sleep. . . .

And so, lying anxiously in my bunk in broad daylight, I fled into the realm of sleep and had a long dream. For nearly a year I had not had a dream I could remember, but this one was intense and fantastic to an extreme degree.

I hesitate to describe it, doctor. It went on for hours and the events which crowded it were so strange that only their vague shadows remain to haunt the memory with incoherent, meaningless pieces. I was rather embarrassed to bring it to you. Is it really possible to have so much talk in a dream? Can I convince you that a scholar's subterranean mind may fashion dreams out of the materials of his work? Then I remembered Freud. Surely, I thought, my analyst must know those dreams of the Master in which he encounters problems in his scientific work and the life of the intellect in general. In his recorded dreams, patients appear afflicted with organic affections; a colleague speaks to him of propionic acid, advises him on injections; he writes a monograph on an unknown species of plant obtained from a herbarium; he is in a bookshop subscribing to a periodical which costs twenty florins a year; he receives a communication from the Social Democratic Committee in which he is addressed as a member; symbolically he dreams of Dreyfus on Devil's Island; he even has a dream which takes him to the revolution of 1848: Count Thun is addressing a crowd of students, and the association calls up memories of Tennyson, Henry VIII, the War of the Roses, anti-Semitism, Zola's *Germinal*, Ferdinand and Isabella, the Spanish Armada, Grillparzer's poem on Hero and Leander, Rabelais's account of Gargantua and Pantagruel; he also dreams of the Pope and the three Parcae; and he is not alone in these learned dreams; he tells us of a chemist dreaming he is going to make—phenylmagnesiumbromide! If such dreams could come to Freud, one of the greatest and sanest men in a hundred years, what do you expect from an obscure history instructor whose nerves were

battered by a year's conflict and torture in a concentration camp? Frankly, doctor, I think I had already slipped from the path of normality at the time of the dream I shall now try to describe for you.

I heard distant music, rather indistinct but inexpressibly beautiful, like Bach on a harpsichord unexpectedly heard through an open window in a far-off tropical village. Then I entered my classroom at the university; only it was not like my real classroom at all; it was a large amphitheater like the one in the medical school where Siegfried Gross had once studied. There was a platform and a reading stand, I could see that quite distinctly, and next to the reading stand an operating table covered with white linen. It was a beautiful spring day and I was back in Vienna in that strange classroom. The fresh air came in through the open windows and the sky was incredibly blue. Outside the trees were a luminous green; among the fragrant leaves a bird was singing. All around me sat the students, young and healthy, with smiling, radiant faces and shining eyes. They looked straight ahead of them, toward the platform, watching the man leaning over the reading stand.

I was impatient. I had come here looking for St. Eusebius. He was somewhere in Vienna and I had to find him. The pact between us had to be fulfilled. I had to rescue him from oblivion. In return he would do me a favor. He would answer the question which had been pounding through my head for years. The moment I found Eusebius, I would ask him: how is it that after nineteen hundred years of the gospel of love the world is still full of wrath, hatred and blood? Young radiant heads were turned toward the platform. As I took a seat among the students, someone, I could not make out who, handed me a telegram: MEET ME ON THE SEM-MERING AT THE OLD PLACE MEANTIME FOLLOW WITHOUT THOUGHT THE FLOWING OF THOUGHT WATCH IT HEAR IT GROWING REMEMBER ALL SOUNDS WORD FOR WORD EVEN THE PAINFUL EVEN THE ABSURD HOW SIMPLE THE SIMPLE MIND THE ELECT ARE CRAZY THEIR THOUGHTS OSCILLATE BETWEEN DEATH AND VICTORY TEMPTING FATE LOVE AND KISSES PEGGY. On the platform, the man's white hair glistened in the morning light; his frock coat fitted tightly around his firm, tall body. My father was poring over an immense volume bound in leather of red and gold. Its title was visible from where I sat: *Of Human Freedom*. The book was signed with my name.

Father closed the book and glanced up at the audience. A wonderful smile lit his kind, strong face; he looked around the amphitheater and the students also smiled as if some great happiness awaited them. My father cleared his throat and said: Ladies and

gentlemen. The students began to applaud, but my father raised his hand and they fell silent and he began to read from the book on human freedom bound in red and gold leather: The revolution one manifestation of a general state of feeling among civilized mankind produced by a defect of correspondence between the knowledge existing in society and the improvement and gradual abolition of political institutions the sympathies connected with that event extended to every bosom the most generous and amiable natures were those which participated the most extensively in these sympathies. A murmur of approval ran through the hall. I looked around for Eusebius in vain. Do you believe, my father said, that men have always massacred one another as they do today that they have always been liars cheats traitors ingrates brigands idiots thieves scoundrels gluttons drunkards misers envious ambitious bloodthirsty calumniators debauchees fanatics hypocrites fools do you believe hawks have always eaten pigeons you will say there is a vast difference on account of free will and reasoning thus we shall arrive at Bordeaux.

Father passed his hand over his eyes, looked up and continued in a voice heard clearly through the amphitheater: Everything is broadcasting the seed of a revolution which must someday inevitably come but which I shall not have the pleasure of witnessing there will be a splendid outburst then a rare commotion the young are fortunate they will see fine things.

Through the open window I noticed a little bird of radiant blue plumage hopping from branch to branch on the luminous green tree, cocking its head this way and that. Ignorance and fear created the gods, my father said, fancy enthusiasm or deceit adorned or disfigured them weakness worships them credulity preserves them custom respects and tyranny supports them in order to make the blindness of men serve its interests men will never be free until the last king is strangled with the entrails of the last priest.

The students applauded, their faces beamed approval. I felt disappointed. My father was indeed reading from my book on human freedom, but only wild fragments I had quoted from Shelley, Voltaire, Diderot. I looked around for Eusebius in vain. Which is better monarchy or republic, my father went on in his rich voice, four thousand years this question has been tossed about ask the rich they want aristocracy ask the people they want democracy only monarchs want monarchy why then is most of the earth ruled by monarchs ask the mice who proposed to bell the cat but dawn is here the golden age has arrived all men shall at last be free.

Outside on the tree the bluebird whirled from one branch to another, and its brilliant plumage glittered in the golden spring sun-

light. That acute joy which sometimes comes to us in dreams pervaded the entire amphitheater, and the young students leaned forward to hear what my father was saying: Yes, the age of reason justice liberty O freedom your gaze is keener than the lightning's glare and swifter is your step than the earthquakes tramp you deafen the rage of ocean your stare makes blind the volcanoes the sun's bright lamp to yours is a fenfire damp from billow and mountain and exhalation the sunlight is darted through vapor and blast from spirit to spirit from nation to nation from city to hamlet your dawning is cast and tyrants and slaves are like shadows of night in the van of the morning light.

I was furiously restless. Hastily I scribbled a note to my father: *Cut it short, we must find Eusebius.* A young student carried the note to the platform. Today, my father was saying, we condemn in the name of democracy actions which made democracy possible. Father read my note slowly, folded it into four parts, slipped it into his pocket. He turned several pages in the red and gold volume on human freedom and pretended to read from it: Christianity was introduced by the most unchristian methods which made Christianity possible.

A loud shot rang out. Students leaped to their feet. Tumult broke out in the amphitheater. What happened? said my father from the platform. It's Werther, sir, a student said, he's dead. Bring him here, said my father. From the distance the bells of St. Stephen's cathedral began to toll *Puer natus in Bethlehem*. Four students—two young men and two young women—marched solemnly to the platform carrying a young man's body dressed in eighteenth century costume. Slowly they laid it on the operating table and marched back to their seats. The dead man held a pistol in his right hand; blood was dripping from his forehead. The bells of St. Stephen's stopped tolling. In the intense silence which now filled the amphitheater, my father looked down on the corpse.

Suddenly the dead man sat bolt upright on the operating table and looked about him with bright blue eyes. He wore satin knee breeches and light-blue stockings but no coat. The crowded amphitheater rustled with excitement. What's the meaning of this, Werther? my father said severely. The shot heard round the world, said Werther. He put his pistol into his blue sash around his waist; his young, handsome face broke into a gay smile. The world will hear from me, sir, he said. I shall travel with Napoleon to Egypt; I shall haunt every novelist in Europe for a hundred years. You damned fool, said my father, what do you want to kill yourself for? That was a revolutionary shot, Werther said. As he spoke the pistol wound in his forehead vanished and with it the blood on his face.

I've just summoned Europe to rise against tyranny, he said. I'm the new era's hero, liberty's genius. Imagine an artist forced to work in a legation! My spirit was too great, too rich for my destiny. Surrounded by dead convention, I glowed with nature's inner holy fire, perceived unfathomable powers working, creating in earth's depths. O how I yearned to drink life's surging joy from infinity's foaming cup! How I longed to transcend horrible limitations imposed by class barriers! I loved nature, art, children, justice and a beautiful woman.

A sigh passed like a light summer breeze through the crowded amphitheater. Young women wept into their handkerchiefs; young men placed pistols on their desks. Outside the bluebird chirped three times, fell silent. She loved me, too, said Werther, but what is love to a society based on caste and money? O thrice happy they whom birth has placed on the heights of humanity, who have never known the valley of humiliation! Desperately seeking to quench my spiritual thirst, I stretched out my hands to society only to hear its snarling *no!* Finally my beloved obeyed society's dictates, married a prig she despised, abandoned me whom she loved. My revolutionary ire against conventional society knew no bounds; but I was helpless. Only the pistol was left me. What good is your death? said my father brusquely. Don't you see, said Werther, my suicide has announced something is wrong with the great machinery of existence. It's going to collapse. You will hear the crash soon. All the old barriers will break down, the old forms will be abolished, the established order will be overthrown, class distinctions will suddenly disappear, the air will be filled with the smoke of cannon, the rousing music of the *Marseillaise*!

Herr Werther's blue eyes and thick, golden hair looked familiar, and it seemed to me I had heard his words somewhere before, or perhaps had read them in a book. My father had vanished from the platform. Werther was no longer sitting on the operating table; he was at the reading stand, leaning over my red and gold volume on human freedom, and he was addressing the crowded amphitheater like a street orator, his face radiant with the joy of years to come. Salute the dawn of the new age, he cried: what splendid liberation awaits all men: the ancient boundaries of kingdoms will be changed and rechanged: kings will be dethroned, beheaded: the religion of a thousand years will be abolished: a lieutenant of artillery will proclaim himself the heir of the Revolution: he will open careers to men of talent: a grenadier will seize a mighty scepter in the north: the son of an innkeeper will ascend a throne: all men will drink from the living fountain of liberty, equality, fraternity!

The bells of St. Stephen's were ringing faintly in the distance

the *Quem Pastores*. The amphitheater vanished utterly with everyone in it. I was standing alone in bright space. It was very still now. Suddenly into the lofty vault of the sky, the little bluebird winged its way higher and higher, singing a wonderful harmonious melody until it disappeared into the remotest edge of azure light. Looking around the square of St. Stephen's, I knew it was Easter Sunday. Vienna's sky was so blue my heart dissolved in joy. From the cathedral came the sound of the choir singing *In exitu Israel de Aegypto*. The song died down. On the steps of the cathedral appeared a tall priest in all his vestments who looked down upon me and said with great solemnity: Be wise be strong kill the monster which you see gnawing at your heart his death will set you free. As the priest smiled, his whole appearance changed. He was dressed in an early nineteenth century costume and I recognized his new face at once as that of Goethe in the serenity of his old age. He appeared as in Kuegelgen's painting, an old man with lines around mouth and chin, but his face full of youth and power, especially those celestial eyes, so wonderfully clear and wise.

"What are you looking for, young man?" Goethe said.

"The source of things," I said.

"Why?"

"To clarify them."

"Do you imagine in your miserable ignorance that you can clarify anything for anybody?"

"No, sir. I only want to clarify them for myself. I am confused, lost. I want to understand a little of what is going on upon this earth."

"And if you were able to track down sources, what do you think you would find?"

"I don't know, sir."

"I'll tell you, but it won't be anything new. It is a great truth discovered long ago. Life has brought misery at all times and all places. Man distresses and plagues himself in vain. He embitters existence for himself and his kind."

"But life is sweet! The earth is beautiful!"

"True, but unfortunately man has not yet learned how to enjoy the sweetness of life and the beauty of the world."

Goethe turned his back on me and faced the cathedral. He waved his fine hands like an orchestra conductor and from inside the cathedral came the sound of the choir singing music from *Orpheus and Eurydice*; but the words were the words of a poem Kurt had once written during his stay in Vienna: Now begins the flaming dawn the hour of release O brush away the cruel fragments of your youth and dedicate your newfound power to truth and pledge

your new heart to the world! The music became unendurably beautiful. I began to run across the square, into the boulevards of the Ring. The streets were absolutely deserted. O there there there was my father! He was walking alone through the Schmerlingplatz. He was going to abandon me. I ran after him crying, Father! Father! He stopped and took out his watch. What time is it, Father? He held his watch to his ear, then examined its face. The time, he said, is spring.

The noise of the crowd was deafening. All around us were people on horseback and on foot. The fragrance of May filled the gardens of the Palais-Royal. The crowd began to cheer: Down with supernatural law! three cheers for natural law! to hell with religion! hurrah for science! long live human reason! down with superstition! down with tyranny! Around us lay the palace, garden, arcades, shops, theaters, cafés, restaurants and bordellos of the Palais-Royal, great whorecenter of Paris, the hell of scoundrels and courtesans, general rendezvous of passions, affairs, lust, prostitution, gambling, agitation, business, assignats. Professor Boucher stood next to me in the crowd, his keen eyes glistening under his heavy eyebrows. Taking me by the arm, he said: We'll never get out of this mob. I'd like to show you the Allée de Soupirs. What beautiful women! We might run across Rameau's nephew: he is carrying on conversations with himself about politics, love, taste and philosophy: his thoughts are his whores: he pursues them as other men pursue women.

A man leaped to a table in the midst of the crowd and assumed the duties of chairman. It was my father. Ladies and gentlemen, he said, silence please: we have a long list of speakers: kindly give them your most earnest attention. The applause rose and died like the roar of a summer sea. In the tree to my left there appeared once more the little bird of radiant blue plumage, hopping from branch to branch, cocking its head this way and that, singing a paean of joy to the brilliant spring sky. My father introduced the first speaker. Ladies and gentlemen, said Signor Machiavelli, the state is not part of the divine order of the world, it's a natural phenomenon, the product of human passions and interests, the creation of politics. Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah! the people shouted, three cheers for Hugo Grotius. Mynheer Grotius, the second speaker, made a deep impression on the audience by basing himself on Aristotle and deducing man's natural rights inviolability of life body freedom property state power proceeds from the people choose whatever form of state they like. Bravo, the crowd shouted, but the next speaker threw cold water on the proposition in no uncertain terms. Nonsense, said Mr. Hobbes, nonsense gibberish drivel twaddle poppycock bosh moonshine jab-

ber babble tosh rant bombast fustian flummery flapdoodle balderdash rubbish and blah! Men are driven by egotistical passions for money, power and glory: every man seeks privileges goods and powers which he cannot and does not want to share with others: natural rights *dreck!*: war of all against all: self-preservation is nullified by self-destruction: hence men's compact not to inflict on others what they would not suffer themselves: men need a power to compel and punish—the state: state power is absolute: citizens are slaves of the state: no right to freedom of belief, conscience, independent judgment on good and evil: society's problems can be solved only through total state curbing men's egotistical passions.

The crowd began to boo, hiss and hoot. Mr. Hobbes was compelled to get off the table. My father, tall behind the speaker's stand, looking the way he used to at Floridsdorf meetings, rapped the gavel for order and summarized the previous speaker's remarks: the state is absolute, you cannot change it. No, no, no! the crowd roared: men create the state, men can change it: the great natural right of the people—revolution!

The gentleman who now climbed on the speaker's table had a vague, benevolent face. Hear! Hear! the crowd shouted: he's going to deliver a discourse on the origins and foundations of inequality among men: three cheers for the Swiss! We must do away with riches, said M. Rousseau. Half the crowd cheered. And with poverty! The same half cheered. No man must be so rich, said M. Rousseau, that he can purchase another and no man so poor that he is compelled to sell himself. The ominous silence of the crowd created an awkward moment but M. Rousseau's courage said: Man is born free and everywhere is in chains off with the chains a free society a democracy of equals let everyone be free O listen listen people of the whole wide world liberty equality fraternity for all!

The cry of the ages uttered in new words soon to become old.

Frantic cheers rent the air; several men leaped forward and carried M. Rousseau off on their shoulders in triumph. When the Marquis de Condorcet followed as the next speaker, my heart beat with great joy. I wanted to rush to him, to ask that old question: how could you love the Revolution which wanted to guillotine you? But I was rooted to the spot; I could not move; my tongue cleaved to the roof of my mouth. The surrounding enthusiasm for Citizen Condorcet was enormous; it was quite a while before the applause died down. Man, said Condorcet, is a rational creature entitled to dignity and happiness. Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah! said the crowd: remember the English! Cromwell! the Glorious Revolution! Three cheers for life liberty property sovereignty of the people! A great stillness fell upon everything. The joy of spring filled every heart.

Out of nowhere a band struck up an air from *The Marriage of Figaro* and the crowd began to sing: Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive but to be young was very heaven O times in which the meager stale forbidding ways of custom law and statute took at once the attraction of a country in romance when Reason seemed the most to assert her rights when most intent on making of herself a prime enchantress to assist the work which then was going forward in her name! How wonderful the air was, how happy every face as the harmonious voice of the crowd intoned: Not in Utopia subterranean fields or some secreted island heaven knows where but in the very world which is the world of all of us the place where in the end we find our happiness or not at all.

As the chant died down, there came through the happy silence a clear young voice crying: Behold America! We all turned in its direction; there, handsome upon a white horse, sat the Marquis de Lafayette, his hand outstretched toward the west where, just beyond the Palais-Royal, gleamed and heaved the beautiful green sea. Behold America, said General Lafayette, the immense and luminous star of freedom emerges across the ocean all men are created equal endowed by their creator life liberty happiness. Amidst the deafening cheers which greeted these golden words, Citizen Lafayette dug his spurs into the white horse under him; animal and rider rose into the air; smoothly, beautifully, with steady flowing rhythm, like a single creature of archaic legend, rider and steed floated above the crowd. There was a resplendent sky fresh with the future; the joy of rebirth was certain and immense. Everyone ran after rider and horse. I was left alone with Father, the Palais-Royal, the great heaving sea.

My father took out his watch, examined its face. What time is it? I said. The time, said my father, is 1789; they are headed for the opening of the States-General: shall we go?

The highway leading to the sea was crowded with men, women and children in rags, thousands and thousands of them begging bread: gaunt faces, burning eyes, the pallor and rage of starvation. All the men looked like Otto Weber, all the women like Emma, all the little children like Ingrid. The crowd stretched out fifty thousand hands and cried bread! bread! From the palace which suddenly appeared on the edge of the sea a woman's voice laughed royally and said let them eat cake. The gentleman who appeared richly caparisoned like a stallion on the marble stairway surveyed the crowd through a gold-rimmed lorgnette. We are hungry, the people cried, our children are dying, give us bread! The gentleman lowered his lorgnette and smiled. The grass has sprouted, he said, go to the fields and browse on it. Reduce the price of bread, the people shouted, save our children! No, no, said the gentleman, it is against the laws of national economy to reduce the price of bread.

Palace and crowd and dying children vanished; my father and I continued along the broad highway to the sea; and the street rose up, the crowd broke into the bakery, seizing and distributing bread. Troops appeared, bayonets dispersed the people, a rioter was arrested and now in the Place de la Grève the scaffold was guarded by soldiers and the noose hung over the head of Otto Weber. Five thousand years of hunger filled the air. You have stolen bread, said an officer, you must die. And Otto cried: I die for the people! His body shot into the air dangling dead from the rope's end. Father and I ran toward the sea and out of the lowering sky a disembodied voice followed us, our servant Marta calling: how long, O Lord, how long! From the distance came the sound of carnival, the invisible noise of gilded carriages, luxurious strains of the minuet, the unseen heaving of couples coupling in parks of lust. Aristocrats waste money like water on orgies, said my father. Ahead the hunger-stricken crowd appeared again, moving densely through the mist of five thousand years of hunger and children died in their mothers' arms. Look, look, Father! I said. They are famished, oppressed, need bread and freedom: who will lead them? The leaders, said Father, are hidden in the heart of the crowd. Where are they? I said: nobody makes himself known: where are Barnave, Sieyès, Mirabeau, Guadet, Vergniaud, Brissot, Roland, Danton, Robespierre, Camille, Saint-Just, the heroes of the Revolution? They are silent, said Father, everyone is silent now, but wait: you shall hear and see the most tremendous tumult in the history of man.

I went to the edge of the sea, leaped into the turbulent waters under the dark skies of dusk and began to swim vigorously. My father followed beside me in a small rowboat; the little bird with the radiant blue plumage appeared overhead, flying close behind us. And now the sea became a deep gruesome red and its spray filled my mouth and I tasted blood; and the rain began to pour down heavily and its salt drops beat down my face. The blood and tears of all the ages, said my father; once we reach the other shore we shall leave them behind forever and ever amen.

Invisible trumpets invoked the dawn; the sea of blood and rain of tears lay behind us like sheets of glass horizontal and vertical: and ahead, where the streak of bluebird winged its way, gleamed the dawn on the nearing shore of gold, and trumpets announced the beginning of history with a cry of joy that encircled the dream of endless light.

I woke with a start. My being was suffused with the most profound imaginable happiness. The lights of the Big Hall were out. I must have slept late into the night and felt deeply refreshed. In the

surrounding darkness I could hear prisoners whispering. I could not catch the words precisely, but their general meaning was clear enough. At first I did not believe my ears, but each additional word that reached me confirmed the incredible was true. Rumors of the night were launching the myth that somehow—mysteriously, inexplicably, certainly—Janos Vekely had been responsible for his own death.

BOOK FIVE

*One after another we are
Fired into life to seek that unseen target where all
Our equivocal judgments are judged and resolved in
One whole alas or hurrah.*

—*W. H. Auden*

1

. . . and ye shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach; and ye shall see this place no more.

—Jeremiah 42:18

INSPECTOR KELLER KEPT his word. Days of dull inaction flowed by like a fog, and some of the prisoners became demoralized. Most, however, kept their wills alert. Hans was particularly calm. "The inspector has learned a few things," he said to me once, "but he doesn't know how we keep in touch with the outside world. That's what he's waiting to find out. There's only one man can tell him, and I never will." Another time: "Keep your eye on Kurt. He's a good boy, but the strain is too much for him. His nerves are cracking."

"Why don't you talk to him yourself?" I said.

"It's too late," said Hans. "Somehow a thick wall has risen between us. I can't penetrate it."

"That's just what he says."

"Too bad," said Hans dryly.

It was true: Kurt had begun to brood and since by the inspector's express orders we were robbed of action he became painfully introspective and talked a great deal to me at all hours of the day and night. Like many people whose nerves are on edge, he tried to conceal his real conflicts by unreal philosophy. Because I was a historian he talked history to me in that dogmatic tone which amateurs alone can manage; but no matter what he said there always emerged the ragged hopes of the frustrated poet. Once he complained that all progressive social doctrines in the past hundred years had assumed that decent human relations could be achieved solely through external change: give everyone the vote, abolish private property, invent more machinery. Nothing changes, Kurt insisted, unless man's heart changes; so far no matter what the environment—look at this lousy prison camp!—some men always find ways of dominating their fellow men. The possible basis of inequality, he said, is infinitely variable; if men can't compete as to who shall have the most riches, as in America, they will compete as to who shall have the least, as in medieval monasteries; if they can't compete in open pride, they

compete in that secret, most intolerable of all prides: humility. Another time he went off on a long tirade to prove bad actions can't achieve a good purpose. Means, he said, determine the nature of ends. Political philosophers have figured out everything except the most important thing of all: how men can prevent the evil side of their natures from using the world's knowledge and technique for evil ends.

"We spend fortunes seeking cures for syphilis, tuberculosis and cancer," Kurt once said in those frightful days of waiting. "Why can't we seek cures for those other frightful diseases—hatred, egoism, vanity, lust for dominion?"

All the time it was obvious that underneath these pat abstractions, Kurt suffered from his unhappy relations with his old friend Hans Bayer. Were his persistent ways of thinking the cause or the result of this misunderstanding between the two men? I don't know; I am not a philosopher; I can only record that Kurt was unhappy amidst the debris of old expectations collapsing silently within him undefined. And he was not alone in feeling the effects of a situation which included Janos Vekely's death, the inspector's deadly silence, our continuous inaction and Hans Bayer's secretive calm in the face of all this.

After a while things became worse. Without warning, the inspector suddenly varied the suspense with which he lacerated our nerves. Frequently a prisoner would be taken out for a beating in Sergeant Muehlbach's torture chamber. There was no special method in the new assault. Sometimes it was apparent the victim had violated a prison rule; at other times men were beaten merely because they had attracted the attention of a guard bent upon the pleasures of violence. It was puzzling just why the guards picked on one prisoner rather than another for this brutal sport. Once in a while it seemed as if certain prisoners unconsciously sought out their punishment; somehow they managed to call attention to themselves at the wrong moment, as if secretly, unknown even to themselves, they *wanted* to be beaten. But the chief object of this new assault on the Big Hall was clear: the inspector was determined to break us to the point where he could find out everything about the Underground so that it could be crushed not only in the prison but throughout the country. Obviously the organization was still at work. Though Hans revealed no secrets, he soon began to bring us news again, and we learned through the grapevine that in Hall Three of the west building the Underground unit had been subjected to a terrible spectacle. The electrician and the two guards who had assisted in Janos Vekely's attempted escape had been executed in the west courtyard at dawn, and all the prisoners of Hall Three had been compelled to watch the headsman bring the ax down on the victims.

That gruesome news created so much tension in our own hall that Hans Bayer finally decided to call a conference. Without saying a word to anyone, he acted as if the special committee he had once formed of Janos, Kurt, Immerman and myself no longer existed. This time he called together a group of about twenty prisoners in which the members of the old committee were included along with some of the more popular prisoners. Among these were four or five youngsters whom Hans wanted to train for the future. We met in the stillness of midnight at the far end of the huge room and huddled close together on the floor around the candlelight under the vaulting shadows. Hans made it clear at the outset that the sole object of the meeting was to discuss ways and means of improving morale in the Big Hall and of preparing for any new tricks the inspector might decide to spring on us. He considered the past a closed chapter, and left many questions unformed and unanswered. We felt he was right; this was no time for anything except the most pressing problems of tomorrow. It was Kurt, in fact, who made the motion to accept Hans Bayer's report unanimously. I remembered long afterward that at this moment his basic devotion to his friend was unshaken; on any practical issue Hans could count on the poet, as always, without reservations. Kurt's motion was passed, the report was unanimously accepted, and we were about to go on with our business, when some crazy impulse drove Kurt to add in a low voice:

"Of course, if Hans wants to explain . . ."

"Explain what?" said Hans calmly.

"There are a lot of things about the escape . . ." Kurt began, but did not finish, anxious as always not to displease Hans, not to create any misunderstanding. He looked around the circle of prisoners; clearly the presence of new people at the conference intensified his usual anxiety.

"What is there to explain?" said Hans. "It was a tragedy. We all regret the loss."

We noticed that Hans was unusually cool and that he did not mention the victim's name. I don't know why I felt uneasy.

"There's no sense in going over this," I said to Kurt. "What's done is done."

Kurt smiled quietly. He looked up at Hans like a son who hopes his beloved father will at last understand and guide him out of an oppressive dilemma. When he spoke it was almost tenderly. That was what haunted me afterward: the love and innocence with which the poet placed his hand into the mysterious, pitiless fire.

"It was a risky venture," he said, smiling to Hans. "We approved it on your authority, and authority involves responsibility."

Don't you think someone ought to take responsibility for the blunder?"

Hans missed the overture altogether; his wholly external soul saw no father and no son; when he replied it was in the tone of a military commander justly annoyed at a soldier out of line.

"Yes," he said, "it must be admitted mistakes have been made." He glanced at Immerman, who grinned back obsequiously. "For instance," Hans went on, "the tragedy might have been avoided if Immerman had handled the details more cleverly. He made some shocking mistakes."

Immerman's face became white as a sheet, and his eyes flashed anger; but the fire soon died down in them. Our group sat silent around a candle and the tension which filled the night was becoming ominous. With a great effort Immerman smiled and said:

"I'm afraid I *have* made some mistakes."

"I'm glad Immerman is man enough to admit his errors," Hans said.

Kurt looked unhappy and confused, as if he regretted having got into this and did not know how to retreat.

"Of course you're glad Immerman admits his mistakes," he said gently. "It's natural perhaps to conceal the big mistakes one makes behind the little mistakes one's subordinates make. What is the difference what technical blunders Immerman committed? The venture was not very wise from the beginning, and the responsibility is yours."

Hans lit a cigarette and I could see his hand shaking.

"It seems to me," he said slowly, "there is a note of disloyalty in Kurt's words."

I wished he were angry. The calm, the seeming friendliness of the discussion was disturbing.

"I am not disloyal either to you or to the cause," Kurt said. "On the contrary, to ignore this situation would be the most terrible act of disloyalty."

"Janos is dead," I intervened. "He can't be restored to life by this bickering."

"Janos is certainly dead," Kurt said. "All the more reason for examining the methods which sent him to his tragic end."

"What methods?" said Hans.

Kurt's face became very soft in the candlelight and his blue eyes tried to penetrate the invisible wall that separated him from his old friend. And when he spoke again his voice was full of affection as in the old Vienna days.

"Please listen, Hans," he said. "You owe it to us and yourself to listen patiently. I may be wrong, but I mean this for the best."

"I'm listening," said Hans coldly.

"Several years ago," the poet said, "a great speech was transmitted to us from the very highest sources of our movement. It was a truly remarkable speech. It attacked the outrageous attitude of certain minor leaders toward the rank and file. It said we have not yet learned how to value people. You brought us that speech, Hans. You read it to us at a closed meeting in Vienna. You impressed its importance upon us. And now you have completely forgotten it." Then he added awkwardly, unhappily: "You've changed, Hans."

Hans Bayer's face in the candlelight became severe and I had never seen his gray eyes so remote and hard or the distance between him and the poet so remorselessly immense.

"Kurt," he said quietly, "who asked you to butt into politics? Why don't you mind your own business? Poetry is a nice harmless pastime. Stick to it. It will be better for us and for you. If you insist on nosing into things you don't understand, which are no concern of yours, we'll break your head."

Kurt turned violently pale. We looked through the candlelit gloom at the two men in restless suspense, and Kurt's lacerated feelings broke the barriers and came pouring out:

"Oh, this is priceless," he exclaimed, "this is rich! I wanted to be a poet, Hans: serving the cause but always a poet. And long ago you said: we must all sacrifice something for the cause and you will have to sacrifice your poetry. Politics is destiny, you said, quoting a better man than yourself, and you must learn politics for our sake and your own and the sake of mankind's liberation. What shining goals you held before my eyes, what terrible damnations over my head; politics, you said, or the bourgeoisie will get you; politics, or you will be corrupting your soul beyond redemption; politics or you will be sectarian, coward and renegade. So it was politics for years; and the unborn poems, betrayed in my heart on the edge of life, burned with remorse till they came no more; and when the world-wide upsurge of the peoples arrived, and you needed poets in spite of yourself, you sought out those who had hated us for a generation and pompously placed synthetic wreaths upon the tarnished reputations of men you never read; and grinned contempt at the friend you had transformed into a hack. And now you say: take your nose out of politics or we'll break your head. Once every cook was learning to govern, and now to govern is your private affair bearing a sign: keep off the grass. Let's face the truth then: I am not an idolator; I have no superstitions about politics; always and gladly I've rendered unto Caesar, for the sake of the cause and the liberation of mankind. I trust your judgment and follow you. But you are not content to be a little Caesar among us. You set limits on us

but not upon yourself: you are not content to govern the wills of men; you want to govern their hearts and minds as well. For years you've told me how to live, dress, read, write, breathe, feel and think; there was no crevice of my soul so remote it could escape the eternal laws you promulgated for a day. I've obeyed your laws for the good of all, for fear of falling into the enemy's abyss. And now you say, keep out, mind your own business, we'll break your head. Very well; in politics I'll follow you to the end, and I'll stay out, and I'll crawl on hands and knees to my dead poems and pray contritely for their resurrection and the life."

Kurt's passionate, senseless words filled the night with agony. There was an awkward pause. Several prisoners coughed; others lit cigarettes as barriers against the tension. Hans stood up. In the spluttering candlelight his severe face was deadly white, as if the accumulated tension he had mastered so long was about to burst out all at once blindly. Trembling with uncontrolled rage, he leaned toward Kurt and said:

"You're a renegade."

That simple declarative sentence fell like a bomb into our midnight group. Tears came into Kurt's eyes; he tried to speak and couldn't. We all sat in stunned silence. The deadly thing Hans had just uttered was as false as it was unexpected. No one knew this better than Hans himself. Kurt's loyalty and devotion were beyond question. What had come over Hans? Had he used the oldest method in the world for silencing the voice that irritates with truth because he was convinced that victory was more important than truth? Was he paying off some old personal score of which Kurt himself was unaware? Then all my nerves relaxed; I realized that my fancy, disordered by the abnormal life of the concentration camp, had made an ominous mountain out of a casual molehill. Charges and counter-charges are the life of politics; I had seen men in Floridsdorf hurl the most violent accusations against each other and forget them in a week. This, too, was a passing flash of anger which would vanish into oblivion before the night was over. Still, one must do something. I raised my hand.

"I'd like to make a motion," I said.

Kurt rose, pale and crushed. He looked around the circle slowly, then turned to me.

"Thanks, Paul," he said in a choked voice. "There's no need for a motion. God Almighty himself can't change what has just happened. The king can do no wrong."

He left the circle, walked slowly to his cot and lay down with his back toward us. We broke up the conference at once and turned in to sleep without saying good night to each other.

At first I really believed that Hans Bayer's damnation of Kurt was a brief burst of rage of no serious consequence. But within the next twenty-four hours it became obvious that a boycott was under way against the poet. As the days passed, his exclusion became more and more rigid. No one would have anything to do with him; no one spoke to him; he was kept out of our secret political meetings and our open general talk; he was thrown into absolute isolation. In a moment of blind rage Hans had denounced his friend's criticism as an unpardonable crime; he had placed Kurt under the ban. Now the poet's conduct was no longer important; the issues involved at the conference had completely vanished. No one referred to them, no one seemed to remember them. All that mattered now was Hans Bayer's condemnation. Had our midnight conference broken up five minutes earlier, the debate would have left no trace of rancor; Kurt would have been forgiven. Now it was too late. Hans had dropped a single phrase and the crushing hammer of anathema had fallen upon his friend.

Even the common criminals in the Big Hall refused to communicate with Kurt. They were dependent upon us politicals for supplies and social life, and our decisions had for them the force of inexorable law. Whom we denounced, they hounded. Yes, doctor, it came to that and with the most extraordinary irony. The isolated Kurt, once the favorite of all, was now fair game for the destructive impulses of the criminals, normally held in check by the SS guards and our own secret organization. The idealists threw their once beloved poet to the forgers and murderers whom they despised; the criminals, in turn, vented upon Kurt their suppressed envy and hatred of the idealists.

Naturally, the idealists misunderstood the situation. They thought the criminals were spitting upon a heretic. They were mistaken. The criminals knew only too well that Kurt's entire being was filled with the great idea of human liberation in its highest form. Their scorn for him was scorn for the real idea; it gave them added pleasure to revile him whom the idealists had once loved so deeply. It was a brutal revenge of the worst upon the best, a triumph at once complete, obscene and implacable.

As for the politicals, we did not discuss the matter. Most of us acted as if nothing had happened. I did not have the stamina for that kind of pretense. Everything about the episode obsessed me with a thousand questions. I was especially aware of the problem at night because Kurt occupied the bunk next to mine. I heard him tossing sleeplessly through the dark agonized hours, and saw him sit up with his elbows on his knees, his face in his hands, bent in tortured thought.

The one exception among the politicals in this instance was Immerman. Usually taciturn, reserved and silent, Immerman now became extremely voluble. He never addressed the young poet directly. That was taboo. But he talked about Kurt to the other prisoners, constantly and loudly, making sure that the poet heard every word: and he took peculiar pride in hurting Kurt, as if he wanted to make the poet pay endlessly in pain for the love the prisoners had once given him so lavishly.

Kurt listened to Immerman's calculated malice without uttering a word. Now and then he would raise his head and look around at us, as if he expected someone to come to his defense, to call Immerman a liar. But no one volunteered to speak up for Kurt, and the poet would turn back into himself.

Once, however, Immerman succeeded in goading Kurt beyond endurance. We were eating lunch at our worktables, and Immerman had been staring at the poet brazenly for some time.

"Well, well, well," he said. "Who would have dreamed that this sweet singer of the people, this mass-poet, so to speak, would turn out to be a renegade? I suppose Inspector Keller will reward him properly."

He was deliberately repeating Hans Bayer's angry lie. Kurt's face flushed red, but he only turned his back on Immerman.

"Isn't life full of paradoxes?" Immerman went on calmly. "First he entertains us with second-rate poetry, then he turns out to be an opportunist. Nothing more, nothing less; just an opportunist."

Some of the politicals laughed at this, but no one replied. The prisoners never talked about Kurt in any way. Immerman chuckled, very pleased with himself and said:

"I've always insisted: don't trust these noble souls. They're no good. Born renegades and opportunists, every damned one of them."

I could contain myself no longer. I understood Hans Bayer's position; you can't have organization without authority, and you can't have authority without discipline. But I knew, also, that Kurt had meant something good. As a matter of discipline, I adhered to the boycott against the poet. I did so with reluctance and have since been ashamed of my conduct; but anyone who has been in a concentration camp will understand how irresistible group pressure can become. Now I turned to Immerman:

"Don't you think you've said enough?"

"Ah, another noble soul!" Immerman mocked. "Tell me, professor, you know a lot of history; can you explain why Rousseau said that man who thinks is a degenerate animal?"

"Did Rousseau say that?" Hans frowned.

"Yes," I said.

"I was always under the impression that Rousseau was a revolutionary thinker. Yet he could say a thing like that."

Immerman saw the conversation getting away from his victim, and obviously did not like it.

"Rousseau was trying to set up feeling against thought," he said, "and that's how he spawned all these literary vermin who betray you in the first crisis."

Kurt's eyes flashed anger and for a few moments he was unable to speak. Then he said in a low voice, looking straight at me:

"You're a lover of Heine, Paul."

I said nothing.

"That's right," Kurt nodded. "You can't answer. But you can listen; well, listen to this one: Wherefore does the just man, bleeding, drag the cross's weight laborious, while upon his steed the villain rides all-proudly and victorious? This we are forever asking, till at last our mouths securely with a clod of earth are fastened: that is not an answer, surely!"

The prisoners fidgeted in silence, but Immerman smiled and said:

"These rhymesters have a wonderful way of taking an old idea and dressing it up in new language. But it remains the same old idea just the same."

"Yes," Kurt said bitterly. "Old as the hills—unfortunately. That's the sad part of it. It's always there: why do the wicked prosper?"

"A question for schoolboys." Immerman's grin broadened. He addressed us without glancing at Kurt. "Besides, everybody can quote rhymes. We all went to school and we all remember some verse. But if you are going to recite something, why not something manly? Take Heine's contemporary, George Herwegh. There was a poet for you! The Iron Lark! Do you know these wonderful lines by him?"

Immerman stopped grinning, threw his head back and began to recite in a curiously strained voice: "Party! Party! There's the word, O name it! The mother of all victory and strength: how can a poet speak this word to shame it, the word which makes all noble things at length: be open, like a man: against or for it? and speak the password: are you slave or free? Olympian gods themselves did not ignore it: they fought in parties through eternity!"

A ripple of surprised laughter ran through the crowd of prisoners. Hans smiled faintly. Even Kurt relaxed his strained features. It was all so unexpected. The idea of Immerman, of all people, reciting from memory a poem out of the roaring forties of the last century which seemed so appropriate to this one, evoked astonished pleasure among us.

To be sure, Immerman had been an enigma among us. There was always a strange smile on his bloodless lips—a smile difficult to decipher under any circumstances. In an atmosphere tense with uncertainty, where we did not know at what moment any one of us might be dragged out for a beating by the enemy, he alone was consistently placid, self-satisfied and exasperatingly certain. Immerman seemed to possess a secret source of strength which lent a mask of courage to his face. That was the chief mystery about him.

His rhymed rebuke to Kurt, culled from the all but forgotten works of Herwegh, only increased the mystery. The politicals congratulated him upon his memory. Kurt alone was absorbed in the thrust his enemy had administered. We were only halfway through lunch, and were still talking about Immerman's performance, when the young poet silently rose from the table and went to his cot. There he stretched out on his back, closed his eyes and lay immobile.

"Hey, poet!" Immerman shouted to him sarcastically. "Why do you go on living? Nobody wants you. Kill yourself. For a louse like you the only decent thing left is suicide."

Kurt did not answer.

2

*It's for dear life alone we shall be fighting,
The poet's living-space, the love of men,
And poets must speak for common suffering men
While history in sheets of fire is writing.*

—C. Day Lewis

THE MORE I tried to fathom the meaning of Kurt's boycott the more puzzling it became. Had there been a serious political conflict between the two friends, everything would have been clearer. Five thousand years of history show that in moments of crisis differences of opinion are often solved with little regard for the more delicate sentiments, which perhaps have no place in history. But Kurt did not object to Hans Bayer's leadership or line; the issues seemed to be personal, trivial, vague; it was ridiculous and embarrassing to give them any thought while the concentration camp enclosed us, while the brown menace lowered over the world, while the drums of war were unmistakably rolling just beyond the horizon.

To be sure, Hans Bayer had become tyrannical; that was natural in our age; besides, the practice and very name of tyranny was a democratic invention in the bright dawn of recorded time. At the great turning points, when the battle rages mercilessly for the future of the world, there can be no compromise on the primary law of conflict: unless the leader knows how to lead and the soldier how to obey, all is lost.

On all practical matters Kurt understood that and acted accordingly. Yet he was obviously unhappy about something fundamental. That passionate, foolish tirade about being compelled to "sacrifice" his poetry to the cause was sheer nonsense. Living with my father had placed me close to the movement; I was familiar with its ideals and personalities; there was every opportunity and pressure to enter its ranks; yet I had managed to stay out, to remain on the best of terms with everybody and to follow my historical studies unhindered. There was something in Kurt which made it impossible for him to retain his independence of mind. He had *volunteered* to surrender his freedom: that much I had seen long ago in Vienna when he had de-

fended Hans Bayer's right to censor his poems. He had accepted a discipline; if it had begun to pinch, he had no one to blame but himself.

At the same time I could not help blaming Hans for allowing a trivial situation to get out of hand. He was the leader, the strong man; he ought never to have let Kurt get mixed up in politics and now he certainly ought to save his thunderbolts for real opponents and vital issues. To crush an old, loyal friend with all the gigantic machinery reserved for major political warfare was fantastic and shameful. Here was one mystery; but there was a greater still. What had begun as a trivial quarrel between friends ended in a remorseless exclusion which tore Kurt to pieces. He moved among us like the ghost of a self no longer living, and his eyes searched in vain for the reconciliation he knew could never come. At night I could hear him tossing and groaning in his sleep, and often he sat up for hours, eyes glowing in the darkness.

Kurt's agony was goaded by the fantastic gossip which, following his ostracism, had begun to make the rounds of the Big Hall. I never found out how it started or what made it grow day after day to such weird proportions; but there it was all around us. Things were said which could not possibly be true. Often it was some prisoner the most remote from the leading groups, the man least informed about what had actually transpired, who was the most active in spreading dark legends which broke Kurt's reputation into shreds. It was rumored he had been segregated for a poem he had written; actual lines were distorted; phrases which could never have entered the poet's brain were crudely invented and falsely attributed; wild interpretations were made of long-forgotten, innocent words. And finally it was openly maintained that Kurt had never been in the movement at all, that he had always been an outsider, a critic, an enemy. Reality became a fantasy; personality was unmade; a man's life was wiped out.

Once, when the broken figure of the poet as outcast haunted my conscience, I asked Hans Bayer:

"What have you got against Kurt? Why do you isolate him without respite? Have you no pity?"

"We know things about him you don't," said Hans in a tone forbidding further questions.

That was untrue. There had never been anything against Kurt. Poet and leader had been friends for years, comrades and brothers in the great war of the world. Had there been anything seriously wrong, Kurt would have heard about it long ago, and so would I. Such things were never kept secret. But Hans Bayer's invention had its deadly effect. It was overheard; it spread through the hall pouring

its all-devouring flames over the poet. Now even prisoners opposed to the party—the Social Democratic doctor, for instance—treated Kurt with cruel hostility. They felt that a man repudiated by those who had known him longest and best must be vile indeed; and with naked pleasure they sank their fangs into the solitary creature cast out by his own pack.

Yes, it was all a terrible puzzle; and in the end I could not help facing the last mystery of it: while Kurt had never dreamed of reaching the remotest rim of Dante's literary genius, he had at last attained, like a secret, undefined, long sought-for goal, that laceration of political exile which had embittered the last years of his hero.

Finally came the night when, unable to sleep, I tried to relax by thinking of music I had heard, books I had read, movies I had seen with Babette in Paris or Peggy in Vienna. I remembered an American film called *The Crowd*: a young man, his eyes closed (were they blind?) wanders lost in the milling throng of a great city. Suddenly I heard the rustling of Kurt's body as he leaned out of his cot.

"Paul?" he said in a low voice. "I know you're not supposed to speak to me. But this is important. It concerns everybody."

I said nothing and Kurt went on:

"You must warn Hans. Immerman is no good. There's something fishy about him. It's a mistake to trust him."

I am ashamed to admit, doctor, that I maintained a stubborn silence. Though I secretly felt sorry for Kurt, I did not want to be caught talking to him; that would mean a breach of the discipline set by the prisoners. I did not share Kurt's views; I had moved for so many years in good society that I had long ago learned to accept, in my waking state at least, that hierarchy and inequality which no society in all of history has so far been able to avoid. After a certain age every man ought to relegate his secret longings for complete equality to reveries, dreams and works of art; yet I felt sorry that Kurt had to pay so bitterly for presenting the wildest promissory note which history had issued in a thousand years to Hans Bayer, of all people, who had never endorsed it and could never decipher it.

"I can't prove that Immerman is no good," Kurt's voice persisted in the darkness. "But I know my instinct is right. The other politicals leave me alone; he's after me all the time. He's always kept a close mouth; now he's full of words. He even quotes poetry—if you can call Herwegh's doggerel poetry."

I sat up in my cot, placed my feet on the cool floor and lit a cigarette.

"Why is Immerman doing all this?" Kurt went on. "He's afraid our people will get on to him. He wants to protect himself at my expense. You've simply got to warn Hans to investigate the rat."

Kurt left his cot, sat down on the floor facing me. He lit a cigarette in the darkness and said:

"I'll tell you what makes me suspicious of Immerman. His loyalty to the cause is so exaggerated it must be a mask. Look at the way he treats Hans. He fawns on him, praises him to the skies, cringes before him. But there is something insincere in all this. It stinks of duplicity."

I inhaled cigarette smoke, blew it out and listened.

"All right, Paul," the poet went on. "Don't answer me. I thought you'd be better than the rest. But what right did I have to expect that? Of course, you are justified in a way, and the rest of them, too. There's a big fight going on, inside and outside this prison, all over the world, and in every war group-loyalty comes first. I'm just one more soldier knocked down in a barrage by the fire of his own regiment. I understand that, and I'm not complaining."

The glow of his cigarette revealed a face haggard and excited.

"But I am right, too," Kurt said. "History has played a great joke on humanity. Every fight for freedom so far has ended in a despotism. Isn't it possible for us to prevent this from happening again? . . . You won't answer me, Paul. Okay."

After a long silence, he continued:

"Hans is stubborn. As long as he maintains pride in this matter, it will create havoc. He knows damned well I meant only the best for all of us. Who does he think he is, anyway—one of the giants of our movement? What an inflated ego our old friend has acquired! The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. A great leader makes mistakes, admits them and rectifies them; a second-rate leader like Hans never admits a mistake. He's got to be right a hundred per cent of the time. But secretly he knows he's wrong, so he must make me pay for his guilt, while showering confidence on a rat like Immerman."

I could not see that Immerman was a rat. True, he had a repellent personality. In the days when he used to stay with me now and then in Vienna, I used to suspect his self-effacement. After my thirtieth year, I always doubted those who were too modest, shy, and retiring, too humble in the face of any experience; I felt such people conceal a terrible desire for power which they cannot achieve openly and are therefore compelled to seek by treacherous ways. But those were mere intuitions, I never acted on them; and now in Kurt's accusation I saw nothing but a poet's injured sensibilities.

Like all men who are accused, rightly or wrongly, he sought relief in accusing others. I had no intention of repeating this nonsense to Hans or any other responsible member of our prison organization.

But I did feel sorry for Kurt. To be cut off from the movement to which you have given your life, to be isolated from the people who have been nearest and dearest to you personally and politically—this was a blow that might shatter the strongest spirit. I wanted to console Kurt in some way, but could not imagine how. As often happened in moments of crisis, all I could think of were analogies from history, and these were not likely to help Kurt now.

"Do you know what I've decided to do?" Kurt said. "I'm going to show up at the next conference and make a scene. It's the only way I can get a hearing. I'm entitled to a trial. It's their duty to hear my side of the story. And I intend to denounce Hans for his arbitrary action against me."

"You can't do that," I said, speaking for the first time.

"So you can talk after all," said Kurt, smiling. "All right: why not? Hans has no right to do this. He's trying to kill my spirit. He can't stand opposition. He is false to the ideals of our cause. This is a fine way to establish better relations among human beings!"

"Don't make any scandals," I said. "You will only render your position a thousand times worse. Besides, you may attract the attention of the guards and we'll all suffer."

"I don't want that. But I can say what I have to say without causing any trouble."

"I know you are treated unjustly," I said. "And I think I know how you feel. What can you do about it? That's what I don't know."

"Thanks for talking to me anyway."

"I owe you an apology."

"No, not to me," Kurt said. "To the idea of decent human relations for which we are supposed to be fighting and for which we are in prison."

"Are we fighting for decent human relations?" I said. "That's a fine idea. But history doesn't move that simply, and it doesn't seem to care about decent human relations. You're a poet. You ought to know some things better than the rest of us. Death redeems, but do you know what redeems most? The understanding of causes."

"What causes?"

"Don't be guilty of sacrilege."

"What are you talking about, Paul?"

"In ancient times sacrilege was the profanation of sacred things, usually the property of the priests. But in the fourth century the church gave the term a wider meaning, one we have retained in our secular life. Sacrilege includes apostasy, heresy, schism. Avoid that."

"What have I done?" Kurt said. "I have been painted a heretic against all my real intentions. Is it a crime to hope that Hans Bayer might boast with Pericles that through his means no Athenian ever wore mourning? No, no, Paul. Something else is involved. Hans has become a successful man of action, a natural scorner of ideologues. O these practical men of action! When have they ever solved anything? They storm and puff through the world, hewing left and right, exacting vast sacrifices, killing people by the millions, making everybody pay for their success, and in the end they leave everything unsolved. Look at the world. After five thousand years of Pharaohs, Caesars, emperors, kings and leaders of all kinds, what a shambles, what a horror, what a failure!"

He was still a boy after all.

"You're exaggerating wildly," I said. "You're a poet, so you take official history seriously. Why not? It's the greatest piece of fiction ever invented. But I'm a historian and not obliged to take it seriously. Mankind's long struggle on this earth isn't all a failure. There is science, art, morality, philosophy."

"Indeed there is," said Kurt, "and every time you want to show that man's agony upon this earth has not been a total failure you are compelled to go back not to your practical men of action, but to the men of spirit and ideas, the so-called dreamers. In the end we all have to come back to the deepest realities, and to love, the greatest of these."

"The world needs men of action *and* dreamers," I said. "And you need to forget your troubles. Hans has been unjust to you, but you have been unjust to him. In the end it will all boil down to a trifle which you won't even be able to remember."

"You cheer me up no end," said Kurt sardonically.

"I'm sorry," I said. "Also I'm probably wrong. But I'll be damned if I can see what caused this mess."

Kurt buried his face in his hands and thought for a while, then he said:

"It's a strange business. Maybe Hermann Broch, your great Viennese novelist, was right after all: the logic of politicians demands that they shall obtain an absolute dictatorship, just as the logic of poets drives them toward absolute justice."

"But we can't possibly have absolute justice."

"Of course not; that's why men have invented poetic justice," said Kurt, "the justice which life denies and poetry alone can give; the turning of the tables, where the murderer is punished at last and the robber compelled to disgorge his loot; where the proud are cast down and the humble rewarded. Maybe that's why poets are

attracted to revolution, the poetic justice of history. But after a while the urge toward absolute justice and the requirements of absolute power make each other uncomfortable. There is a peculiar kind of hypocrisy, too, which confounds some poets. We all praise the people, the mass, the rank and file, yet strong men break each other's heads for the privilege of rising out of the mass. Those who praise it most want to belong to it least. Too many of us are Senecas writing paeans to poverty on a golden desk."

The square and the circle. I had gone over that often in the years that had vanished into the mists of time. Professor Boucher had teased me about it when I was a student in Paris; I had wrangled with the mystery of Condorcet; Kurt and I had opened our minds to each other on Cromwell and Milton and the meaning of Dante's fate; and the first time I got to know Hans Bayer we had argued about the relation of any dream to the reality it breeds in the womb of necessity. But I had got over that long ago: I had become a realist, as every historian must be in his public life. The historian, by the very nature of his profession, cannot help being on the side of necessity; he must side with the men of action whose deeds create the saga he records. He describes the executions, exiles and wars of the French Revolution as one describes last year's weather; he is not called upon to shed tears over them; what concerns him is the net result; long after the shooting is over and the dead are lost in the tombs with the dead of the Crusades, the Catacombs and the battlefields of Assyria, he summarizes the net result as judicially and truthfully as he can; like Professor Francis Charles Montague of England, for example, writing in 1910: "Although the French Revolution seemed to contemporaries a total break in the history of France, it was really far otherwise. Its results were momentous and durable in proportion as they were the outcome of causes which had been working long. In France there had been no preparation for political freedom. The desire for such freedom was in the main confined to the upper classes. During the Revolution it was constantly baffled. No Assembly after the States-General was freely elected and none deliberated in freedom. After the Revolution, Bonaparte established a monarchy even more absolute than the monarchy of Louis XVI. But the desire for uniformity, for equality and for what may be termed civil liberty was the growth of ages. . . . Accordingly it determined the principal results of the Revolution. Uniformity of laws and institutions was enforced throughout France. The legal privileges, formerly distinguishing different classes, were suppressed. An obsolete and burdensome agrarian system was abolished. A number of large estates belonging to the crown, the clergy and the nobles were broken up and sold at nominal prices to men of the middle and

lower class. The new jurisprudence encouraged the multiplication of small properties. The new fiscal system taxed men according to their means and raised no obstacle to commerce within the national boundaries. Every calling and profession was made free to all French citizens, and in the public service the principle of an open career for talent was adopted. Religious disabilities vanished, and there was well-nigh complete liberty of thought. It was because Napoleon gave a practical form to these achievements of the Revolution and ensured the public order necessary to their continuance that the majority of the Frenchmen endured so long the fearful sacrifices which his policy exacted." It was all very lucid, very just, very natural—long after the event. In the heat of the event, who could blame the poet for seeing each tree in the forest? Though he decried some of its more despotic moments, who has ever doubted Shelley's passionate devotion to the French Revolution? The mystery of the square and the circle could haunt my dreams to the end; in reality I could not even acknowledge its existence. Yet I wanted with all my heart to help Kurt, in whose innocence and good will I believed completely. I now took his hand in the darkness and said:

"Listen, Kurt: in the third century of the Christian era there lived in the Roman Empire a Christian teacher named Origen. He was one of those people who influence many generations. He took it upon himself to reconcile the science, philosophy and literature of the classic world with the new faith which was destined to rule Western civilization for the next fifteen hundred years. He fused the highest culture of antiquity with the new gospel of love. He taught and eventually convinced men that the sacred oracles of Christianity embraced all the great ideals of four thousand years of history from Akhenaton to St. Paul."

"Go on," Kurt said. "I like Origen."

"Origen's character," I said, "was extremely pure. His life was blameless, and he was popular with his fellow believers. He held no official position in the church, but was permitted to preach in the congregations. This gave him a kind of presbyterial status, and that was important now, for the church was already organized in a caste system."

"Wasn't it always organized that way?" Kurt said.

"No; but we needn't go into that now. Origen's popularity roused the jealousy of various people. They started to circulate vicious rumors about him. It was said he took advantage of the confessional to seduce women who confided in him. This was a lie."

"Character assassination?"

"Something like that. Origen was terribly upset by the lie which his enemies in the church circulated. He decided to repudiate it in a

way which could not leave any possible room for doubt. He planned a drastic act which would convince the world that the church and its commandments was dearer to him than life itself."

"He committed suicide," Kurt ventured.

"No," I said. "He carried out literally the saying in the Gospels that for the sake of the Lord we ought to make ourselves as eunuchs."

"What! You mean . . . ?"

"Yes. Origen's action was an unfortunate literalism, heroic in its way, if you like. He proved once and for all that his own manhood was of less value to him than his salvation in the church."

"Good Lord!" Kurt said. "How terrible!"

"After all," I said, "Origen only sacrificed the physical attribute of his manhood. Today there are people so anxious to retain their standing in whatever faith they may follow that they gladly sacrifice honor, integrity, reason and common sense. Origen sacrificed his glands for the church, but at least he retained his soul."

"Okay, okay," Kurt said impatiently. "Get on with your story. It takes my mind off my own troubles."

"Origen went back to teaching and was more popular than ever. He was happy in his pious labors. Then, when he was about forty-five, his great popularity aroused the envy of the Bishop Demetrius. The bishop convened an episcopal synod at which he denounced Origen, and the synod exiled Origen from Alexandria. Not satisfied with this, the bishop convened another episcopal synod. This one deposed Origen from his presbyterial status, degrading him once more to the position of layman. Origen was forbidden to teach in the congregations."

"Why are you telling me this idiotic story?" Kurt said irritably.

"Most church historians," I said, "believe that at this second episcopal synod Origen was excommunicated."

Kurt looked up at me in the night and I could see him smiling.

"Why did they excommunicate him?" he asked.

"We don't know for certain. Origen was never tried. He was never given a chance to present his side of the case. Three Egyptian bishops, headed by the envious Demetrius, rendered the judgment, and to this day we do not know what grounds they gave for their condemnation. It is said one of the charges against him was the very act of self-mutilation he had committed for the greater glory of the church, but that's only a guess."

"Maybe Origen was read out of the church for deviating from orthodox doctrine," Kurt said.

"If so," I said, "the judgment was particularly unfair. Origen's philosophical methods were completely beyond the understanding of

a man like Demetrius, an illiterate, domineering busybody eaten up with envy of his illustrious victim. But the judgment of an official body prevails, no matter who presides over it. Origen found himself the scapegoat of his factional enemies."

"Come to the point of your story," Kurt said.

"Origen had a great soul," I went on. "He wrote his friends urging them not to hate his enemies in the church, and to forgive them. But he must have felt bad; he cited the prophets Micah and Jeremiah: Trust ye not a friend; put ye no confidence in a familiar friend; my people is foolish; they have not known me; they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge."

"Three cheers for Micah," Kurt said, "and three more for Jeremiah."

"Despite the terrible injustice which Origen had sustained at the hands of his envious ecclesiastical enemies," I continued, "he insisted upon the duty of a presbyter to endure his injuries when he is unjustly deposed by an inimical faction."

In telling Origen's story I was following my inveterate habit of historic analogy, "the only method by which living forms can be apprehended." I was saying aloud to Kurt what I usually thought secretly to myself—a mark of esteem and love for the poet.

"Your parable is pretty thin," Kurt said. "What are you driving at?"

"I think the moral of my story is clear enough," I said.

"Not for me," Kurt said. "I've never had a good head for puzzles."

"The ancients were lucky in one respect," I began. "They expected nothing from their rivals, enemies or conquerors. In any conflict it was your business to win; otherwise, *vae victis*! The idea that your enemy or your friend must treat you with consideration is a Christian idea. It follows logically from the basic teaching: if I am to love my enemy, then presumably he must love me. This idea has left its mark on Western civilization; even the rankest Western atheist cannot escape its influence. The moment a man repudiates the idea of woe to the conquered, that moment he is already under Christian influence. The thing which has most shocked the world about the Nazi 'revolution' is that it seeks to reestablish the code of *vae victis*! The rest of us continue to judge each other and pretend even to judge our own actions by the Christian code."

"I'll gladly admit all this," Kurt said, "if you'll get back to Origen. Where's the connection between *vae victis* and Origen, and how did we get to Origen in the first place? Do you tell me this because the miserable find comfort in the thought that not on them alone has evil fallen?"

"Consider Origen's treatment at the hands of the Bishop Demetrius," I said. "That part, at least, you ought to see without much trouble. Church historians coined a beautiful phrase for that kind of thing: *episcopal envy*."

"Yes," Kurt said quietly. "The hierarchy kicks the follower in the teeth, and the synod sustains the injustice. And of course it was very Christian indeed of Origen to forgive his tormentors, though he did cite some bitter passages from the prophets against them. It's all very inspiring. What finally happened to Origen?"

"Origen," I said, "became the most distinguished and influential of all the fathers of the church, with the possible exception of St. Augustine."

Kurt laughed softly. The darkness was lifting and the first gray streaks of dawn were visible through the barred window at the end of the hall. I could now see the poet's blue eyes, and they were wrinkled with sardonic laughter.

"I'm afraid you fail to get the point of your own parable, Paul," he said. "Origen's final triumph obliterates his temporary defeat at the hands of his envious episcopal detractors. But what about us ordinary mortals for whom no seat is reserved on the heights of history? We sustain persecutions which are equally senseless and cruel. But where is the historic triumph to redress the balance? Who will say in the future that Hans was wrong and I was right? Nobody will even know we had ever been alive! For us ordinary mortals there is no happy ending to expose injustice and render it ridiculous. We sink into oblivion, with nothing to mitigate the malice and suffering we have endured in vain. What do you say to that?"

I could think of nothing to say, so I lit another cigarette and smoked in silence. The barred window was growing red with dawn. I was going to break up this queer dialogue when I suddenly thought of Eusebius.

"Nobody can be certain of immortality in the pages of history," I said. "Then again, nobody can be certain of oblivion. Like your poetic justice, history occasionally, though not too often, casts down the mighty and raises up the humble. Just before I was arrested, I was at work on an old fourth century parchment which told of a Eusebius until now utterly lost to history. It's a very fragmentary manuscript; it does not enable us to piece together the life and works of Eusebius. But the fragment at least is here; the name of Eusebius has been recovered. I did not have the time to trace his story, but the parchment is now in a Berlin museum. Someday someone will hunt down the true history of Eusebius, and he will be known to posterity and judged according to his true merits."

Morning light poured in through the barred window. Several of the prisoners began to wake, looking around them with that incredible glance which came to us each morning as we realized this concentration camp was not a nightmare but a reality.

"You have given history the attributes of God," Kurt said. "It redresses in the heaven of its textbooks the injustices committed in the affairs of men on earth; but what good will the discoveries of the scholars do Eusebius, dead these fifteen hundred years? And what good will anything that posterity might say about us do me? An utterly unjust hatred has been let loose against me, a personal rancor masquerading as political realism. I am helpless against it. I feel as if I were entering the last stage of my life. This hatred will be the death of me."

"You surrender too easily to illusions of persecution," I said

"Hmmm. Now it's an illusion. And this from you—an educated man. But then you are Viennese, full of the new psychology. Can't you see the difference? The paranoiac fancies himself Napoleon and that's an illusion. But Napoleon *is* Napoleon and that's reality. There are madmen who imagine they are hated unjustly, and there are sane men who *are* hated unjustly, especially in a period like ours. The slaughter of the innocents."

"I'm sorry, Kurt," I said, putting my hand on his shoulder. "You suffer and I talk riddles. Forgive me."

"There's nothing to forgive," Kurt said quietly. Then he raised his blue eyes, suddenly stricken with bewilderment, and said: "Then you have guessed how I feel? Yes, it's painful." He lowered his head and went on almost to himself: "When the inspector used to put me in solitary, I was physically alone, but I never felt alone; I belonged to something great and alive in the world, I felt close to the comrades here and everywhere, to all of mankind. Now I feel utterly lost. I can't relate myself to anything; I do not seem to belong anywhere; I can't believe I am alive. For the first time in years I have begun to think of myself as a sick man thinks who hears the relentless grave calling him. And do you know the worst of it all? I cannot live without loving men, and now they have deliberately strangled my heart, leaving it bitter and dead."

The shrill whistle of the guards blew reveille. The prisoners leaped from their cots and began to dress quickly. Kurt rose from the floor, went to his own cot and began to put on his clothes. I could see from his haggard face that I had failed to console him.

All that day his suffering under the boycott which Hans Bayer had initiated cut deep. His face, usually pale, was now flushed with a sickly pink. An iron wall of silence surrounded him. He had borne

the insults and beatings of the guards without breaking; but you could see him cracking under the excommunication by his fellow prisoners. This was the most awful punishment I witnessed in all my stay at that prison camp. More terrible than the breaking of a man's body is the breaking of his spirit. It is the ultimate cruelty. Death itself cannot be so dreadful as the slow, inexorable violence done to our souls. And strangers cannot inflict this kind of punishment; only those nearest us can do it, kinsmen, friends, comrades. Among savage tribes, the man who has violated a taboo does not have to be killed. He is ostracized and wastes away slowly, surely to his grave.

Kurt moved among us an isolated, reviled figure upon whom our fellow prisoners turned eyes ablaze with a cruelty of which only idealists are capable. Nobody remembered what had started it all. It was only with the greatest effort that my own unusual memory was able to recall that Kurt's crime had been to take too literally hallowed notions of equality, justice, freedom and truth. Kurt really believed he was Hans Bayer's equal, that he had the right to ask for explanations, that his personality ought to be treated with respect even though he wielded no worldly power. What made Kurt's position all the more acute was the fresh memory of the great love we had all borne him. The prisoners were doing Kurt a frightful wrong, and they could forget their crime against him only by redoubling their hostility. The poet was enveloped in a hatred far greater than any we felt for the inspector and his tormentors. You must understand that, doctor. It goes with any profound, fanatical faith. Thomas Aquinas insisted heretics are worse than pagans: he who has promised and not fulfilled is worse than he who has not promised and not fulfilled.

All that day I watched Kurt's face grow more haggard, his blue eyes more clouded. Finally night came. It was suppertime, and we ate our soggy gruel without conversation. Hans, Immerman, Kurt and I still sat at the same table, and here the boycott against the poet was most frigid. A strange, ominous silence hung over the Big Hall. Suddenly, Kurt's voice cut in sharply:

"A man's worst foes shall be those of his own household."

No one answered him. Kurt looked around at us, this time like a helpless child. Tears came into his eyes.

"Why doesn't someone answer me?" he asked in a broken voice.

The prisoners riveted their fanatical eyes on the poet's ravaged face, but not one voice answered his appeal. Kurt stood up, his whole body shaking with rage and grief.

"Speak to me!" he shouted. "For God's sake, speak! What crime have I committed? Why do you treat me like this? Are you going

to kill me because I spoke the truth? All right, then—kill me—but speak to me!"

From the head of the table Hans Bayer looked with cold scorn at the poet. Then he lowered his head and went on with his meal. Other prisoners followed suit. They had long ago come to identify everything worth while in prison life with the single will of Hans Bayer. A lone exception, I kept looking at Kurt. He now turned to me slowly.

"This boycott is driving me crazy, Paul," he said in a low voice. "What did I do? I dared to ask a question; I dared to bare my soul. Is that a crime? Are we no better in the end than those monsters out there?"

He pointed his thin hand toward the iron door of our hall, through which we could hear the armed guards pacing up and down the corridor.

"Take it easy," I said. "It will all straighten itself out."

I had broken the boycott. A deafening roar filled the Big Hall. My words had released the pent-up feelings of the prisoners. They were shouting all at the same time and I could hardly make out what they were saying. Hans Bayer, his face red with rage, rushed up to me and seized my collar.

"Here, you!" he snapped. "Don't you dare talk to that renegade!"

Behind him stood the tall figure of Rudolf Immerman. His curious bulging forehead was wrinkled; one long white hand, rough from prison labor, was clenched into a fist.

"Why don't you mind your own business, professor?" he said.

He stepped forward and shot out his long right arm. The hard knuckles caught my nose and it began to bleed. I lowered my head and went for Immerman. He's taller than you: keep him busy guarding his diaphragm. The prisoners formed a circle around us, and began to sing loudly to prevent the noise of the fight from reaching the guards in the corridor: *Brothers, toward sunlight, toward freedom!* I wish they'd pick another song. Cautiously moving around my opponent, I caught sight of Kurt's pale, bewildered face, then of Hans watching the fight calmly from our long table. Everything appeared unreal through the heavy fog of hatred. Why? Why? Why? What was the sense of all this? Life had united, prison divided us—and the animal antagonism was senseless. A sharp wallop from Immerman's right sent me sprawling to the floor. I lay face down trying to get my breath.

"Fight, you stinking intellectual," rasped a prisoner serving a life term for killing three children in a career of perverse lust.

"Get up," said Immerman, digging his heel into my back.

I began to crawl on my hands and knees toward the edge of the

circle. The prisoners resumed singing at the top of their voices: *Brothers, toward sunlight, toward freedom!* I got to my feet and rushed headlong into Immerman. I was a jungle creature like the rest and hardly knew what I was doing. His face was soft under my fists and I kept pounding away at it until I realized he was up against the iron door. Hot with rage, I banged his head into it. The impact resounded loud and hollow through the chant of the prisoners. The song stopped abruptly. Immerman slid his back along the iron door and sank to the floor. I felt sick. This vast hatred without meaning, this senseless animosity of friends had made us all vile.

Why? Why? Why?

I heard the prisoners roaring behind me in wild turmoil. Several of them rushed forward and dragged Immerman to his bunk. I walked to the long table and began to wipe the sweat and blood from my face. Prisoners were shouting from all parts of the room; I could not hear what they said, but saw Hans smoking at one end of the table, and at the other Kurt with his head buried in his arms.

"You're a good guy, Paul," said Hans Bayer. "Why don't you mind your own business? And now—forget it."

The iron door opened. Attracted by the roar of the enormous room, SS guards came marching in headed by Sergeant Muehlbach. Every prisoner took his seat. Kurt raised his head and looked around the hall. For some reason he stood up and lit a cigarette nervously. Sergeant Muehlbach walked quickly toward Hans, who sat hunched over the table, his eyes lowered.

"What's going on here?" Sergeant Muehlbach demanded.

Hans looked up slowly at the SS officer, then turned his head and fixed his eyes upon Kurt. The poet was still standing limp beside the table. Hans continued to stare at him. He did not say a word, but his hard gray eyes bored long and persistently into the haggard face of him who had once been his beloved friend. There could be no mistake about it: the sustained silent glance was an accusation. Perhaps it was not meant for the guards at all. Perhaps it was meant only for us, as if to say: you see where these troublemakers and renegades lead you in the long run. Sergeant Muehlbach followed Hans Bayer's gray hard look and saw the poet standing helpless and abject. Then Kurt, overwhelmed with an unnecessary but inevitable sense of guilt, contrite that he could be even the indirect cause of intervention by the guards, turned to me and said:

"I'm awfully sorry."

That simple, conventional phrase sealed his fate. Sergeant Muehlbach signaled swiftly with his right hand. Two guards seized Kurt. The poet, until now broken under the hatred of his old friends,

stiffened his body and stood straight and proud among our enemies. Then he turned to Hans and said in a voice which rang clearly through the room:

"I hope this makes you happy."

The guards dragged Kurt out of the Big Hall into the corridor. The iron gate clanged behind them. Leaning silently over our cold supper, we could hear the sound of whips and truncheons, and a familiar voice dying away in an inhuman cry. We looked at each other and said nothing. The fate of the heretic did not concern the prisoners. They were not glad to see the poet punished by the guards; they could not approve the actions of the common foe; but they were not sorry, either: there could be no sympathy of any kind for one whom they had driven out of their ranks and their hearts. As far as they were concerned, Kurt had died the moment he was read out of the fold. What happened to his ghost was no affair of theirs. The punishment of Kurt for committing no crime had to justify itself by its very extremity.

Kurt disappeared from our midst. We did not know what happened to him. The only one in a position to find out was Immerman, whose job took him freely through the prison. But we never asked him for any news of the poet. That, too, was part of the boycott.

On the third night, however, Immerman volunteered some information. We were eating supper as usual, and had reached our so-called coffee, a brown watery mess whose only virtue was its warmth. Immerman's face broke into one of his self-satisfied grins.

"What do you think happened to the rat?" he asked. "He's been given solitary. A private room all to himself and a healthy diet of bread and water."

From the head of the table, Hans rose in silence. He walked to his bunk, stretched out and lit a cigarette. The other prisoners broke up into groups and a whirl of talk filled the Big Hall. Not a word of that talk referred to Kurt.

The next day, without warning or explanation, Sergeant Muehlbach marched us into the courtyard for military drill. It was a pleasure after weeks of nervous inactivity. In the afternoon we were ordered to resume our customary labor of cutting leather. We were back at the old routine.

3

*Dead men naked they shall be one
With the man in the wind and the west moon. . . .*
—Dylan Thomas

IT WAS A HOT morning. I had not slept for hours, and now there was no use trying: the guards would soon call us for courtyard exercise. I tossed in my cot, victim of those fantastic questions which often assailed me. Must everything really become its opposite? *Omnia mala exempla bonis initiis orta*, said Sallust: all bad actions spring from good beginnings. Kurt's punishment was out of all proportion to his offense; but do not most of us suffer that way through life? His name was never mentioned among us; he was gone from our midst, isolated, invisible; but the memory of him would not let me be. In the chain of events leading to the poet's exclusion was Hans Bayer's love of power, Janos Vekely's envy and death, Kurt's passion for the absolute. At first I had been inclined to blame the passion for the absolute. My fight with Immerman made me wonder. How did I ever get into *that*? I had not identified myself with Kurt in this quarrel, yet I had fought for him, as I had once fought on the Schmerlingplatz for a demonstration of which I was not a part, and again on the university campus for a people to which I did not belong. Anyone who thinks the murder of Karl Leibknecht or the frame-up of Sacco and Vanzetti rouses only political feelings is a fool or a mediocre politician, a quack clever enough to profit from the historic process he will never understand. There is a little thing called justice. It cast a new light on Kurt's excommunication.

The word *excommunication* started rolling through my head these sonorous lines from the great English historian of Rome's decline and fall: It is the undoubted right of every society to exclude from its communion and benefits such among its members as reject or violate those regulations which have been established by general consent. In the exercise of this power, the censures of the Christian church were chiefly directed against scandalous sinners, and particularly those who were guilty of murder, or fraud, or of incontinence; against the authors, or the followers, of any heretical opinions which

had been condemned by the judgment of the episcopal order; and against those unhappy persons who, whether from choice or from compulsion, had polluted themselves after their baptism by an act of idolatrous worship. The consequences of excommunication were of a temporal as well as a spiritual nature. The Christian against whom it was pronounced was deprived of any part in the oblations of the faithful. The ties both of religious and private friendship were dissolved; he found himself a profane object of abhorrence to the persons whom he the most esteemed, or by whom he had been the most tenderly beloved; and as far as an expulsion from a respectable society could imprint on his character a mark of disgrace, he was shunned or suspected by the generality of mankind. . . .

The undoubted right of every society, yes. But our society had not excommunicated Kurt until one man named Hans Bayer had given the signal, and Kurt was no scandalous sinner, murderer, fraud, lecher, heretic or idolater. Rumors to that effect were circulated only after the exclusion and only at the expense of the truth. More remarkable still, Hans Bayer was usually a very patient man. He could tolerate Immerman as a son of a bitch because he was "our son of a bitch." Prisoners who violated the discipline of our secret organization usually found Hans patient and sympathetic; he gave them a hearing, took account of extenuating circumstances, was just after his own fashion. In Vienna and in the concentration camp he had shown me great consideration and confidence. He had saved me the day after Janos Vekely's death when the prisoners wondered where I had spent the night; he had overlooked my fight with Immerman, urging me to "forget it." But I was a professor with connections in the highest circles of Vienna; a sympathizer, not a member. Kurt was different. An old friend, a loyal follower, he was hounded without just cause, without a hearing, without sense, without respite; and it was at that point, and that point only, that I began to identify myself with him, as I had once identified myself with the people in the Schmerlingplatz and old man Gross. The sight of a pack turning against a helpless individual, especially when the cause was questionable or trivial, always did something to me. History would have to transcend its present limitations; authority did not operate on objective grounds alone; there were dark, mysterious personal forces of which we knew little and which could work terrible damage. Kurt's treatment began to obsess me to the exclusion of everything else.

The guards blew reveille, banged on the iron door of the Big Hall. All prisoners began to crawl out of their bunks and to dress swiftly. A hum of talk filled the room. The door opened and Sergeant Muehlbach came in with several armed guards.

"Attention!" the sergeant cried.

We stiffened like soldiers, falling back easily into the old routine. We were marched through the dimly lit corridor, up and down long stone stairways, into the courtyard. For an hour we were forced through exercises in silence, running around the yard in single file. Then Sergeant Muehlbach called a halt, and we were marched back to the Big Hall.

In the long column of prisoners that began to wind into barracks, Hans Bayer was directly behind me. I felt his hand tapping my back, but did not turn. As we passed into the dim corridor, I put my hands behind my back and felt his fingers touching mine. Suddenly Sergeant Muehlbach's hoarse voice growled:

"Halt!"

We clicked our heels together and stood still. The sergeant came up and said:

"What's going on here? Let's see your hands."

I spread out my empty palms. Sergeant Muehlbach turned to Hans.

"What were you trying to give the professor?" Sergeant Muehlbach snapped.

Hans shot his hand up to his mouth and tried to swallow something. He was not quick enough. Several guards seized his closed fingers and pried them open. A piece of paper, crumpled into a small ball, rolled to the floor. The guard picked it up and handed it to Muehlbach.

"Passing a secret message, eh?" the stocky sergeant barked.

He tugged at the ends of the crumpled paper and tried to straighten it. A glance at the contents made him grunt with contempt; he looked coldly at Hans, then at me. In all this time, I have never been able to figure out why Hans tried to pass me that note in the line of prisoners marching back to barracks; he could have waited until we were in our bunks, where the guards could not see us. But who is free of that sense of guilt which secretly impels us to commit catastrophic blunders?

"Come along, both of you," Sergeant Muehlbach said. "The rest get back to your places."

The prisoners looked straight ahead as they marched into the Big Hall. Hans and I followed Sergeant Muehlbach down the corridor. We did not look at each other. Behind me I could hear the receding tramp of the prisoners. We followed the sergeant into another wing of the prison. Here was my old solitary cell. Sergeant Muehlbach ordered me to get in; the iron door closed on me; through it I could hear the sergeant marching Hans away. I stretched out on the iron cot and looked at the gray stone walls. What had Hans

wanted to give me? Who had sent the message which had failed to reach me? What did it say? I felt tired and furious. Movie scenes flickered through my mind. I thought of Werner Kraus in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, with his tall hat, comical pince-nez, long opera cloak and cane, and the fantastic walls sloping across the screen dark oblique designs of doom.

I've already told you about this habit of remembering movie shots, doctor, especially in moments of great agitation. No doubt you think it's a neurotic habit. Perhaps you are right. But I think I can explain it another way, though of course it's your duty to suspect a patient's explanation. Still, didn't you tell me to say everything that came into my head, no matter how ridiculous, irrelevant or mad? I believe my habit of suddenly remembering scenes from movies or passages from history is not necessarily a flight. It's my way of trying to face reality. See how our civilization has chopped up man's being into a hundred little bits. The events of the day are what is commonly called "reality"; the movies represent our imagination on the simplest, most obvious, most universal level; history represents man's recorded experience in space and time. Would you say, doctor, it's psychopathic to attempt a correlation of these three realms of being? Can we understand experience without considering the events of the day *and* our fantasies *and* the recorded past? Lying alone in that cell, I thought of Dr. Caligari; then, without transition, of the Emperor Valentinian, master of the Roman world, who took great delight in imposing the death sentence for slight or imaginary offenses. This Caesar's favorite expressions were: "Strike off his head!"—"Burn him alive!"—"Let him be beaten with clubs till he expires!" I thought what a genuine twentieth century ruler the emperor was, and promptly fell asleep.

At dusk I was awakened by a boot in my ribs and a voice bellowing:

"Get up, shit-heel!"

The black-uniformed figure of Sergeant Muehlbach towered over my cot. I stood up.

"Follow me," the sergeant ordered.

I marched behind him to Inspector Keller's room. The sergeant knocked three times on the heavy wooden panels, the door opened, and we entered upon a strange scene. Around the huge room stood a score of guards and officers with revolvers at their belts, whips in their hands. At his desk, in the center of the room, under a glaring electric light shaded with green celluloid, sat the tall, dark-skinned inspector. His black eyes twinkled with sardonic laughter, but his features were composed and hard.

At one side of the desk, with a calm, expressionless face, stood Hans Bayer.

"Professor Schuman!" the inspector rapped out.

I stepped forward to the desk and faced him.

"Professor," the inspector said, "today the ghost of Janos Vekely walks again."

Involuntarily, I shuddered.

"Your secret organization arranged for Janos Vekely's escape," the inspector went on coolly. "We shot him. Proof of your conspiratorial activities within these prison walls was now abundant. Any fool would have acted right then to break up your organization, to punish your leaders. Not I. First it was necessary to prick you with suspense, to let you worry for weeks as to what I really knew. Ah, to keep your victim guessing, to have him writhing on the spikes of uncertainty—that's a pleasure you will never understand, my dear professor. Power follows inexorable natural laws. It is necessary to break your opponent's will before you break his neck."

Inspector Keller picked up a familiar sheet of crumpled paper from his desk and looked at it thoughtfully.

"The death of Janos Vekely is an interesting affair," the inspector said.

Hans looked steadily at the inspector with his hard gray eyes.

"The death of Janos Vekely is something that concerns us," Hans said. "It cannot possibly concern you any longer. You killed him. Be satisfied with that."

"Yes, Janos Vekely is dead," the inspector smiled grimly, "and that is unfortunate for him; but your secret organization is still alive, and that is unfortunate for you."

He glanced at the crumpled sheet of paper on his desk, and addressed me.

"Understand this, professor: the moment to make an issue of your Underground was not at a dramatic moment like Janos Vekely's death. That would have been too obvious; you all expected it; you were all on your guard. But this message here"—he lifted the paper in his long dark fingers—"this message is, by comparison, a trivial affair. What is a piece of writing compared to the death of a man—even in our age, when men die like flies? So you see, at last the right moment is here."

He waved the crumpled sheet of paper at me and said sharply "Now, professor, what do you know about this message?"

All I knew was that this, obviously, was the message Hans Bayer had tried to slip me in the morning. But I did not know what was in it. I stood silent. Inspector Keller leaned ominously across his desk.

"As an old and trusted friend," he said sardonically, "I strongly advise you to answer that question, professor."

At my left Sergeant Muehlbach scowled a brutal warning. I looked uncertainly at the inspector's long dark face, then at Hans. Rigid and motionless, Hans stood at my right, his face revealing nothing. But his gray hard eyes said plainly to me: Speak, you have nothing to fear. I turned to Inspector Keller:

"I know nothing about that paper, sir."

"Do you know what's in it?"

"No, sir. I had no chance to read it."

Sergeant Muehlbach stepped forward to the desk.

"He's telling the truth, sir," he said. "I grabbed that paper before the professor could get it."

The inspector rose and began to pace up and down behind his desk. Then he whirled toward Hans.

"You had plenty of time to read it!" he shouted.

"I did not," Hans said coolly. "I've already told you a dozen times: I don't know what's in that paper."

"You've told me a dozen times, have you? Well, we are very generous. We always give a man an opportunity to change his mind."

He wheeled around to the guards.

"Kaschumbo!" the inspector rapped out.

Several guards with whips walked briskly toward Hans. Someone knocked three times on the heavy wooden door.

"One moment!" the inspector said.

The guards relaxed beside Hans. The inspector turned to the door.

"Enter!" he said.

Two guards marched in. Between them—thin, haggard, infinitely tired—came Kurt Hertzfeld. He looked straight ahead of him like a sleep-walker.

Behind the guards a fourth figure came slinking; there was a sickly grin on his face, and his green eyes gleamed maliciously. It was Immerman. He shuffled toward the inspector's desk, raised his right hand in stiff salute, and cried:

"Heil Hitler!"

His lanky figure stiffened to attention. I glanced at Hans. His face remained impassive but his gray eyes became hard and clear like ice. Inspector Keller looked at Kurt's livid face and turned to the guards.

"Has the bard confessed?" he said.

Before any of the guards could answer Immerman spoke up.

"No, your Excellency," he said. "He refused to talk to us. But

the most important fact is clear as daylight. He wrote that message. He gave it to me in the toilet while I was fixing the pipes. I passed it on to Hans Bayer."

As Immerman spoke, a profound change came over Kurt. His large eyes came awake and their blue contempt flashed upon Immerman for a moment. Then Kurt faced the inspector.

"What is that dirty stoolpigeon talking about?" he said.

"Watch your tongue, young man," the inspector said. "Immerman is a spy, but that doesn't make him dirty. No civilization is complete without the spy. The spy everywhere enjoys better pay and greater respect than the poet."

"Sure," Kurt said. "That's why I have enlisted in the great cause. I want to see a world not only without classes, privileges, poverty and war, but also a world without spies."

"A pathetic dream," the inspector said. "You'll never live to see that world."

He walked up to Kurt and held the soiled white paper close to the poet's face.

"What do you know about this?" the inspector said. Then he quickly walked away and took his seat behind the desk.

"I wrote that," Kurt said quietly.

"Hertzfeld," the inspector said, "I've had a chance to test your mettle. After your friends and comrades kicked you in the face, I called you in here and tried to extract some information from you about their secret organization. I pointed out how unjustly you have been treated; I showed you these people are no friends of yours. They are religious fanatics, men intent upon power who do not know the meaning of the word *friendship*. They imagine their lofty goal relieves them of all human responsibility. That, too, is a great law of power. It is true for us, for you and for the democracies. I gave you every chance to speak frankly; I offered you that which ought to be most precious to a poet—freedom. You were stubborn. You refused to talk. You said nothing would induce you to betray the very men who hated and persecuted you. You insisted you were taking this attitude not to spite me or to protect them, but for the sake of some crazy principle of how men ought to conduct themselves toward each other. A good Christian by birth, you even fell so low as to cite a Jewish proverb you had picked up somewhere in those filthy volumes which have corrupted your mind: *Where there are no men, be thou a man*. You're an incorrigible idiot, Hertzfeld. Why should I believe you now when you try to take sole responsibility for this message upon which the fate of your secret organization hangs? How do I know you are not trying to protect Hans Bayer here, all the more because he has broken your neck?"

Kurt looked straight into the inspector's face, but said nothing. The inspector pointed to Hans, but addressed the poet.

"He is the head of your organization, isn't he?"

Still Kurt did not answer.

"I said this man is head of your secret organization here," the inspector said sternly. "We know you have such an organization. We know this man is the head of it. And you are lying to protect him. Now speak up and speak truthfully before we break every bone in your body. Speak before we teach you what you should have learned long ago, that a good whipping can be more terrible than moral injustice."

Kurt smiled and said nothing. The inspector leaned across his desk and said gently:

"Who wrote this? Who gave it to you to transmit to your group in the Big Hall? It came from the outside, didn't it?"

"I wrote it," Kurt said.

"I'll teach you to lie, you castrated ape!" Inspector Keller roared, leaping up from his chair. I had never seen him so angry before. He seemed determined to bring everything to a head.

"I can prove it, sir," Kurt said quietly.

Inspector Keller took several swift steps forward, halted, placed his hands behind his back and looked sharply at the poet. His keen, malicious features were now composed like those of a hunter who is sure of his prey and poises his body quietly for the kill.

I thought: Is Kurt really lying? Is he sacrificing himself to protect the group which has excommunicated him, or telling the truth? Why surrender to the enemy so easily?

I could see a strange light in the inspector's black eyes. They were searching the young poet's face relentlessly. The inspector must have known, as I knew at that moment, that either to lie or to tell the truth in this case was for Kurt an act of continued identification with the group which had excluded him. That was the real puzzle. I glanced at Hans Bayer standing beside the inspector's desk. He had not moved. His body was now at ease, like that of a man who had foreseen every eventuality and was prepared to meet any fate. He looked neither at the inspector nor at Kurt, but kept his eyes fixed on me, and there was an ironic smile in them I could not decipher.

But had Hans Bayer really foreseen every eventuality? Had he suspected Immerman of being a spy? Did he know in advance that Kurt would remain loyal to the end? Was this sense of being at home in any event real prevision, or the politician's gift for adapting himself to any circumstance, secure in the myth which gives him strength, the myth that he is always right?

I looked at Rudolf Immerman and quickly averted my eyes from

him. The smirk of satisfaction on his face was unendurably repulsive. His fleshy features were bathed with obscene perspiration, like that of a man who has just committed some tabooed physical act of which he is openly ashamed and secretly proud. I could almost smell the odor of treachery which emanated from him, and wondered what possible satisfaction a creature of this kind can derive from trapping his fellow men, what folly and vanity on our part had enabled him to impose on us so easily. How had it all happened? Had Immerman entered the movement from the beginning as a spy for the enemy? Had he been a secret traitor in the ranks of the movement all these twenty years? Or had he started out sincerely and only in the course of time yielded to corruption and betrayal? Certainly his work in the movement over these years was not of a kind to develop the finer sides of a man's character. He had been a spy for the good cause; as such he had become accustomed to wear masks, to dissemble, to lie, to say things he did not believe, to conceal his real thoughts, to peep through keyholes, to rifle desks, to enjoy luxury first as a pose then as necessity. Few men survive things like that. But why beat your brains against questions you could never answer? The secret was locked in Immerman's rotten heart. And what was the difference? The history of the crime was less important than the crime itself. There stood Immerman in our midst, the eternal Judas, the everlasting ally of Cain, man the trapper aiding man the killer. And I noticed, with some satisfaction, that Inspector Keller avoided Immerman with deliberate contempt, as one avoids a useful chemical which stinks. The inspector was still intent upon Kurt.

"You can prove that you wrote this?" he said, brandishing the crumpled message toward the poet. "How? Do you expect us to go through the farce of comparing your writing with this?"

"That won't be necessary, sir," Kurt said. "I'll tell you word for word what's in that paper, and I'll bet you nobody else can."

"Very well," Inspector Keller said with decision. "Tell me word for word what's in this paper."

Kurt smiled and looked around him. There was an uncomfortable silence for a moment. The SS guards shifted uneasily; Sergeant Muehlbach coughed hoarsely; Immerman continued to grin with malicious satisfaction; but Hans stood unmoved, continuing to look straight at me, as if he expected me to understand something. I could not imagine what it was.

At last Kurt turned to the inspector. The poet's face was composed, his blue eyes stern. Something in his spirit suddenly filled the room with a strange power, as if the electric current of his decision had rendered him invulnerable because pure. For some unaccountable reason, I shuddered again. Then a curious thought ran through

my mind. Here, I said to myself, a man waiting at a crossing of time, resolutely turns his head forward, refusing to brood on the past; at last he knows, face to face, a truth whose shadow had rushed by him when he was young. He knows at last that crime cannot be wished away or good things wished into being. He has begun to apprehend the naked laws that govern men's ways. He knows, and not from books this time, that there is no forever. Nothing stands still. If the liberating dreams he loved had to perish, this nightmare also will perish. Dreams will return to fulfill themselves. And in this timeless flux, the man wills to try his fortune, to find his way, to outwit or crush prevailing evil, to wreak the good he was born to wreak, to utter the truth he was born to speak. He will devise those maneuvers and assaults which in quiet certainty, upon the highest promontories, plant victoriously the banner which in all eras and all lands the best of men, waiting at a crossing of time, have held, sacred and inviolate, in patient hands. That is how the words rushed through my head, and I cannot say even now whether they came spontaneously out of my own being, under the terrible pressure of this scene in the inspector's office, or whether they were revived by an oversensitive memory from something read or heard somewhere, some time in my past life.

"What you now hold in your hand, sir," Kurt said, "is a poem." The inspector grinned.

"That's a very flattering description of it," he said.

"It runs," said Kurt, "something like this: The crowd is hanging yesterday's hero: it jeers the fallen idol in the square: how can it forgive the vanquished? the insults of the survivors rend the air: last year's dogs are lions now: they lead the cheering in the chilly street: hurrah for the only virtue—victory! down with the only sin—defeat! The crowd avenges its own homage: it spits into the eyes of hope: there is your vision, conquered upstart: recall it, swinging from the relentless rope: But look! the corpse grins: the dead man knows his monument will rise along the street: the vision will abide, its victory will square accounts in Time with his defeat."

The poet's voice died down, and his face suddenly became very tired. Behind him, Immerman stood positively jubilant. Everything seemed to be turning out just as he had expected; it was he, apparently, who had foreseen everything.

But a surprising look had crept into Hans Bayer's face. Despite his effort to conceal his feelings, he seemed startled. Obviously, he had expected anything to happen except this. He still kept his gray eyes on me, and this time they conveyed not a message but a question.

Inspector Keller turned to Sergeant Muehlbach gravely. Pointing to Immerman the inspector said:

"Sergeant, what has this fellow to say about it?"

Sergeant Muehlbach straightened up and said in a tone of routine report:

"Immerman has been giving us information regularly, sir, and we have always found it accurate. These people have revived their secret organization. There's no doubt about it, sir. As usual, Immerman relayed messages for them, and reported to us afterward. This message was handed to him by Kurt Hertzfeld for delivery to Professor Schuman. The rest you know, sir."

"That is correct, sir," Immerman said with obsequious pride.

"Nice work, Immerman," Hans said bitterly, and at this moment I felt he was deeply human; he has trusted this Judas as he had once trusted Helga; he was like the rest of us, suspecting those who are good, confiding in those who are evil.

The inspector ignored him. For a moment he studied the piece of paper before him. Then he looked up at Kurt and said with venomous calm:

"You've recited the lines correctly, young man. They are undoubtedly yours. Now—what do they *mean*?"

I could not see Kurt's face at the moment. My eyes were on Hans, who kept looking questions at me. I sensed the suppressed fury that was raging within him, that fantastic anger which overwhelms a man who has committed an utterly senseless injustice and has to listen to the complaint of his victim.

"Come! Come!" the inspector barked. "Don't waste our time. Who is yesterday's hero? Who are last year's dogs? What is the meaning of this cipher?"

I was surprised at the inspector's choleric temper. His customary calm had vanished. Always at ease with power, whose laws, he fancied, held no mysteries for him, he was disturbed by the mysteries of art. It was obvious he attached some immediate, practical meaning to Kurt's lines which they could not possibly contain.

Kurt's quiet laughter made me turn in his direction. His face was devoid of fear. His eyes shone with genuine amusement. He stopped laughing and walked to the inspector's desk.

"I'm sorry to disappoint you, sir," Kurt said slowly; "but that is not a cipher or code of any kind. It's doggerel, if you like. But there is nothing mysterious about it. It means just what it says."

Inspector Keller leaned back and surveyed Kurt from head to foot.

"Young man," he said slowly, "you've been here long enough to know that we are not men to be trifled with. You're not going to stand there and tell me you went to all this risk merely to get a *poem* to the professor. Even a fool like you would know better than to gamble his life for a trifle like that. Your jingle is code. There cannot possibly be any doubt about it. It's some kind of political message for your secret organization. Now: what does it say?"

"I've already told you, inspector," said Kurt, smiling. "It says just what you see there, nothing more and nothing less."

The inspector turned sharply to me.

"Professor Schuman!"

"Yes, sir."

"You say you never had a chance to read this message?"

"No, sir, I never read it."

"But you heard it just now."

"Yes, sir."

"Very well, Now look at it."

He handed me the crumpled paper and as I took it I felt my hand trembling. I glanced at the verse in silence, and saw that Kurt had recited them accurately from memory. I handed the paper back to Inspector Keller.

"Now—what does it say? And no nonsense about it."

"This is not code, sir," I said. "It's just a poem, nothing more."

"Nothing less," Kurt's voice cut in.

The inspector ignored him and hammered away at me.

"And you don't know what it means?"

"May I speak frankly, sir?" I said.

"Certainly, go ahead!" the inspector said. "Frankness will be refreshingly original around here."

"Excuse my saying so, sir," I went on, "but you surprise me very much. You handle difficult situations with masterly calm, and here a mere jingle upsets you."

The inspector's eyes flashed anger, and he seemed about to say something, but changed his mind.

"You are a practical man," I said. "And you can't think that anyone might act out of any but practical motives. It seems incredible to you that a poet should risk his life for a poem; but that's precisely what he *would* risk his life for. In your sense of the word, this poem is not code. In another sense, all poems are code. The journalist deals with the news of the day; the poet deals with the news of the century. It is possible to decode a cable by a journalist; it's not easy to decode a poem. One must feel it. Let us say, then, that this poem is a wholly personal utterance, the complaint of an immature soul against the

inevitable cruelties of life, the kind of thing any poet would write anywhere about his private troubles with the world."

"Thanks for the apologia," said Kurt ironically.

The inspector smiled broadly.

"Professor," he said, "we have your complete record. You are one of those naïve liberals who always put the sweetest construction on everything. These people have taken you in. They may have deceived you into believing this is a mere lyric. They're not going to deceive me."

I became terribly depressed. I knew perfectly well that what Kurt had written was in no sense a coded political message. It was a poem about his private grief, no more, no less. But Inspector Keller could neither understand nor believe such things. He lived in a world of ruthless conflict in which everything must have a practical fighting purpose, and nothing we could say would dissuade him from that illusion.

Sometimes, in dreams, I have felt the helpless horror of trying to walk and not being able to move from the spot. A profound sense of weakness overwhelms you at such moments. It was this kind of debility which now seized me. How can you make people see the truth when they refuse to see it? I felt faint, and the most stupid ideas coursed through my head: the phrase, *none so blind*, the remembrance of Galileo trying in vain to convince his relentless judges that the earth does move.

"And what have *you* to say about this?" the inspector rapped out to Hans Bayer. "You're no innocent like the professor here. We know all about you, Herr Bayer. You were always a troublemaker, and now you're head of this filthy secret organization here. Look at these lines and tell me what the code really says."

Hans did not reach for the paper. He kept his hands behind his back and his face impassive as before. When he spoke, it was in a low firm voice.

"I know nothing about this paper," he said. "I don't know what that jingle means, and I don't give a good goddam. Furthermore, I have nothing to do with the man who wrote it, and he has nothing to do with us."

Hans was obviously trying to protect our organization, whose revived secret existence was entirely in his hands. That must be his first thought. But the tone and phrases in which he did this contained another meaning. He wanted to make it clear that he was not a soft-brain but a very practical fellow. Any man who wrote poetry under the circumstances of cruelty, conflict and death which prevailed in the prison camp must be crazy, and Hans wanted no part of him.

The bitter tone, the harsh phrases were intended to repudiate Kurt, as if to say: he doesn't belong to us: do what you like with him.

I looked at the poet. Kurt's smile had vanished from his wide eyes. Their blue surface was clouded. He closed them for a moment, as if he could not bear the sight of the external world. When he opened them, they were full of tears. Where the inspector had failed, Hans Bayer had succeeded in causing the poet the most extreme imaginable anguish. The inspector stood up. He looked sternly first at Hans, then at Kurt, finally at me.

"Gentlemen," he said, "we have received strict orders to wipe out your secret organization. But we can't lay our hands on it. It's too deep underground. There is only one way to stop it. We are going to make an example of the ringleaders. Where the head is gone, the body can't survive."

The inspector paced up and down in silence for several moments. In that silence, I saw Kurt and Hans look at each other for the first time in that room.

Hans Bayer's gray eyes were hard, cold, full of contempt. There was stern accusation in them; they seemed to say to the poet: See where your stupidity has led us all, what a miserable dreamer you have been all your life. Those big words and fancy air castles of yours have only landed us in the enemy's trap. After all, I was right. Your good will was futile; only your folly and vanity prevailed. These have in effect made you the instrument whereby the enemy may destroy us.

Kurt's eyes were full of melancholy, regret and accusation. Looking steadily at Hans, they seemed to say: You have no right to blame me; rather blame yourself. Because I asked you to consider your conduct for your sake and ours and the future, you broke my spirit, isolated me like a mad dog, pursued me with your silent hatred. Did you expect me not to feel the injustice or the pain you intended me to feel? What is happening now is unavoidable. One excuse would serve these monsters as well as another. You drove me to an innocent utterance which they convert into an act of guilt. You could have prevented all this. But it's too late. What a burden this would be on your conscience—if you had one.

The room was stuffy. I felt dizzy. Inspector Keller stood behind his desk, looking at us in a strange, intense way. Sergeant Muehlbach coughed nervously again. The guards stood at respectful attention. Immerman craned his neck to get a better view of the inspector, and his pale face bore the ambiguous look of a man who has contributed to an event whose final outcome is beyond his control.

"I have complete authority in this camp," the inspector said

quietly, "and we can dispense with further formalities. I have listened to you all. I shall now pass judgment."

Again I shuddered against my will. The inspector turned to Hans Bayer.

"We are going to break up your secret organization after all," he said. "And we are going to do it in the quickest, most effective way. No organizations can exist without leaders. We are going to set an example to your fellow prisoners which they'll never forget."

He turned to the guards and said calmly:

"Set the executions for tomorrow at dawn. Prepare the block. Order the headsman to get ready."

Several guards left the room. The inspector turned to Hans Bayer, then to Kurt Hertzfeld.

"You two must have expected this for a long time," he said. "You may think of each other what you like. You may disagree on a thousand details. But essentially you are guilty of the same thing. You were both instrumental in creating and directing the secret organization. Your motives were different; the practical result, from our viewpoint, was the same. One of you loved the tangible pleasures of power; the other chased after the mirage of justice. Either desire leads to war upon everything we stand for. For this end you were both willing to lay down your lives. I shall grant your wish. The world lies before us. We have no more time to waste on small fry like you. We are liquidating this business; we are closing up shop to go abroad. So you two must die . . . tomorrow . . . at dawn."

Hans Bayer's hard gray eyes never left the inspector's face as his death sentence was pronounced. Kurt grew terribly pale.

Hans and Kurt did not look at each other as the guards took them silently out of the room. On leaving, each of my two friends said good-bye to me with his eyes. The door closed behind them. I felt sick at the pit of my stomach.

The inspector turned to Sergeant Muehlbach.

"All the prisoners," he said, "must be taught a lesson they will never forget. At dawn, you will march them into the courtyard. They will stand at attention and watch their leaders die under the ax."

"Yes, sir," said Sergeant Muehlbach, saluting.

Immerman chuckled softly. Apparently the idea was one he could not have thought up himself, and it seemed to please him no end. The inspector looked at him, waited until the soft, repulsive laughter had died down, and said:

"Ah, yes, Immerman. That reminds me. All societies, whatever their avowed principles, treat the spy with great regard. But that is true only so long as he is useful. After that the spy becomes the most

dangerous and loathsome of creatures. He knows too much. He is too corrupt. He has worn so many masks he no longer has a face of his own. He can't be trusted. He must go."

A horrible cry tore out of Immerman's throat. He fell to his knees, embraced the inspector's boots and began to slobber in a loud voice. The inspector did not look at him.

"You, too, must die, Immerman," he said. "Together with your victims, under the same ax, at the same time, tomorrow at dawn."

Immerman tried to speak through his wild lament, but only an inhuman wail came out of him. He fell to the floor hysterically. The guards dragged him out of the room.

My nerves were giving way. The room was a dark circle whirling around the inspector. Leaning against the desk, I steadied myself as best I could. The inspector smiled.

"As for you, professor," he said. "You are in some ways a harmless intellectual fool, full of books and words, a twentieth century Don Quixote. You have read so much past history that you haven't the slightest understanding of the history being made under your nose. Go back to your cell."

My knees buckled under me, but a guard took my arms, steadied me and took me out of the inspector's room. Walking down the corridor toward my solitary cell, I was engulfed in the most profound feeling of depression. The thought that I would stand tomorrow at dawn among my fellow prisoners and watch the heads of Hans and Kurt falling under the ax was too horrible to bear. I even felt sorry for Immerman; in the face of death he ceased to be a reptile and became a man. Then, out of this depression, came the slow accumulation of relief and joy. I felt the rapture of being spared. I was going to live. The dubious existence granted me by the inspector, that sinister demiurge in whose hands lay the power of life and death, stretched out before me like a radiant vista.

"Hey, you!" a voice shouted behind me.

I halted and the guard beside me also halted. An SS trooper, running down the corridor toward us, came up breathing hard.

"The inspector wants to see you, professor," he said.

We marched back to the inspector's room. He was sitting at his desk, smoking a cigarette through a long ivory holder and reading the crumpled paper containing Kurt's last poem. As we entered, he put the paper on the desk, and said:

"Sit down, professor. Have a cigarette."

I took a cigarette and my hand trembled violently. The inspector lit a match for me.

"Professor," he said quietly, "I owe you an apology. This poem

by your friend has upset me, the devil knows why. I am not myself today. After you left this room, I reconsidered your conduct. I understand you did not want to compromise your friends. But they are beyond compromise. Wouldn't you like to say something now?"

"What is there to say?"

"Look, professor. I carry some magnificent titles around here. I am inspector in the SS. I am commandant of this camp. When the war comes, and it will come sooner than you think, I shall take my place as a major general in the mightiest army the world has ever seen. But first and foremost I am a realist. I like to call a spade a spade. I know my role here. How would you describe it, professor?"

"I should say you are a jailer, sir."

"Precisely. I am a jailer and not ashamed of it. We men who love power enjoy it wherever we can. Better a cabinet minister than a jailer, but better a jailer than an impotent professor of history."

I tried to stop the words but they came out anyway, and I heard myself saying:

"I wouldn't change places with you, sir."

"Precisely," the inspector said. "That is why I am here and you are there. I want you to tell me what you know about the secret organization. I want to send up to Berlin as complete a report as possible. Now that your group is going to be broken up anyway, perhaps you would like to tell me something about it."

"I have nothing to tell you, sir."

"That's too bad, professor. You leave me no choice. I let you go before in a fit of absent-mindedness, or perhaps it was sheer idiocy induced by arguing with a poet. Fortunately your stubborn refusal to divulge vital information recalls me to my senses. . . . Why, professor, you must be nervous. You've crushed your cigarette without smoking it. Here, take another."

He handed me another cigarette and lit it for me.

"There are four reasons why you must die, professor," he said, blowing out the match. "First, there is the inexorable political law that when you wipe out your enemies you must exterminate the innocent with the guilty. Secondly, your heart is in the wrong place; you believe in freedom, after all; you haven't the slightest idea of how to achieve freedom, but you believe in it, and that in itself is dangerous. Thirdly, you know too much, though in a wholly different sense from Immerman. Men like you can poison future generations by reminding them that even systems as powerful as ours cannot last forever. The head which carries that kind of knowledge cannot be permitted to remain on its shoulders."

The inspector's words sounded far away, but I heard them clearly.

"There is a fourth reason why you must die, professor. With Hans Bayer and Kurt Hertzfeld gone, the secret organization is likely to choose you as its leader, and thereby continue its existence in spite of everything."

I heard my voice laughing, like that of a man giddy with alcohol or drugs.

"Don't laugh, professor. If you haven't learned this little lesson from history, you have learned nothing. An organization is a living entity. It may continue its existence regardless of who leads it. Great organizations with great ideas have often been led by stupid, mediocre men. You are fantastically impractical—but a healthy rank and file can correct that. Once an organization lives, its leaders are like kings. Think of the mighty nations that have been ruled by half-wits and madmen, bolstered by capable ministers. Your organization will need a front, and you are likely to be that front. Not through any special political ability of your own. Heaven forbid! You don't know the first thing about politics. But you are in the line of succession. You were the man closest to Hans Bayer, Janos Vekely and Kurt Hertzfeld. You are, so to speak, the natural crown prince by the accident of proximity—one of the most powerful accidents known to history. Men who are governed—that is, the majority of men—need a sense of continuity in their governors. You are the only one who can supply that sense of continuity, until your closest subordinate is ready to get rid of you. You, too, must die, professor."

He crushed his cigarette in the ash tray, and rose. I saw his blurred, high form vaguely moving toward me; his face, indistinct in the dizzy whirl about me, looked satanic. I felt his hand on my shoulder and it was lead.

"Good-bye, professor," I heard him say from a great distance. "I'll see you at dawn at the execution block."

I fainted.

I must have slept for a long time. When I awoke it was dark. I was back in solitary lying on my cot. There was terrible silence and the darkness; then I heard the beat of the guard's boot in the corridor outside. My senses were still confused and a great weight lay on my heart. Vaguely I remembered I was condemned to die, then slowly it came back to me that three other men were to die at the same time. A great fear seized me: the fear of death: at dawn: all my fellow prisoners watching: the ax. Then? I wished I could pray. To whom? I no longer believed. Oh, for a substitute, something to ease the certainty of death. History? I did not believe in history either. Who would remember? Who would care? Who would hallow and ease the memory of our suffering with love? Nobody. Millions are dying like

flies and I am one more fly. He was wise who said nothing is more disagreeable than to be hanged obscurely. Kurt was right too: it's different with the great; people write books about them, explain them, justify them, give meaning to their lives and deaths within the unending, merciless stream of time. Someone finds them, thinks about them, understands them. St. Eusebius. He was now in a Berlin museum. Some scholars, remote from the crimes of their government and the tumult of the world, are poring over the yellow parchment. The intellectual detectives are on the trail; they will find the clues and rescue St. Eusebius from oblivion. How did he die? Who mourned and remembered him? If there were a heaven, I would meet Peggy and Father who died by violence in these violent times. Condorcet and Eusebius, too—who knows?

I sat up on my cot. Outside the cell I could hear the guard marching up and down the corridor with deadly rhythm. Days and nights, weeks and months had passed and I had lost count of time, but I knew in a general way that this was the summer of my fortieth year. Now there would be no need to count time: there would be no time: I would be dead. I was going to die at dawn and wanted to know what was happening in the world. I wanted to be conscious, to live, to care about the important things to the very last moment. A great longing for life overcame me, I wanted the prison walls to fall down, so I could walk out into the world, alive, free.

There was a tremendous commotion in the corridor. Boots came running from all directions, converging somewhere near my cell. Rough voices shouted orders; a door banged. Again voices:

"Take the bastard down!"

"Cut the rope!"

"Wait till the inspector hears of this!"

"You'll catch hell, and no mistake about it."

"How should I know a shit-heel like that would hang himself? What was I supposed to do, sleep with him in the same cot to prevent his suicide?"

"All right! All right! Drag it out into the corridor—that's better."

"Come on, clumsy! Lay it on the floor. Here, you two—get a stretcher."

I tiptoed to the door of my cell, pushed aside the iron cover of the peephole and looked out. Several guards, their collars disheveled from exertion, were leaning against the wall, breathing hard.

On the floor, his face swollen and purple in death from strangulation, lay Rudolf Immerman.

4

*I was in high regions of beautiful world and life,
I visited the extreme palaces, stroked the glowing air,
Went up through hitched forests to a gold plateau
And all was triumph, magnitude, deep vistas . . .*

—Richard Eberhart

I TRIED NOT to think of Immerman's suicide or tomorrow's executions. The thought of death drove me back to life, and I tossed in the night remembering my youth in Paris when everything was bright and full of great expectations and the redemption of man seemed to hover over a world naïvely apprehended; and I loved a girl, a teacher, a friend and a ghost named Condorcet; then I recalled my book on human freedom, unfinished, irrevocably lost, whose last pages, analyzing the final results of the French Revolution, had pitched a note of faith, hope and reason. Dawn would end all that on the execution block. I had lived a series of lives and died a series of deaths; this would be the last. Was I dying sane or had the suffering of these last years unhinged my mind? A greater fear than that of death seized me, the fear of madness; and I fell asleep and had a strange dream and woke and fell into the dream again. It lasted all night, a terrifying serial of mad scenes. Every time I opened my eyes, I remembered impending death and fled back into the sleep which borders on it. I was at the foot of the Semmering mountain on Good Friday; the sun was rising; before me I recognized a somber figure: Dante. Sublime poet of Europe's history, I said, guide me up this mighty hill where many answers lurk. I cannot, the great Florentine said. Historiographer, O Reason's slave! you ignore man; you see the facts, not the suffering behind them. Farewell! He vanished. I wandered alone frightened up the Semmering through a great mist; it cleared; I was in St. Stephen's cathedral kneeling before the portraits of my parents on the desk, saying: Blindly through youth I groped along walls, seeing nothing: wild dreams burned; frightful things befell: now sightless agony is gone; the world lights up; the beginning is clear: at last I see how richly you bestowed your selfless love.

The bells of St. Stephen's tolled deeply; clouds gathered heavily

and blew away, and here was the Rue Saint-Honoré, and Robespierre's house out of which came Babette with delicate oval face, crying with joy: O Paul, I've waited! Remember Fontainebleau? I loved you in that happiest of all times. I kissed her, saying: I, too, was happy; you shed tears for me. O! she said: and now we stood on a bridge, the river below us: rain was blowing through the mist, dusk through the rain: a blurred sky like a cruel fist tortured the mirror of the Seine: intricate clouds unfolded, twisted, melted like smoke and merged again: shadows like enormous seas that tumult in a dream of pain billowed along the Tuileries and the wind shrilled like one insane: and I said: let me go, Babette, my darling. I kissed her again: she began to weep: don't go, Paul, stay in Paris. No, no, I said, I wish I were twenty-three. Babette held up her pocket mirror to my face. Look, you *are* twenty-three! she said. My eyes stared back at me, clear, naïve, able to see again. Frightened, thoughts flashed through the air. I must go, I said and started to run across the bridge, wishing with all my heart I had met Peggy long ago in Paris and had never known any other woman and had shared all felicity with her from the beginning. I was certain she was alive; I must find her.

But there, down the Rue Saint-Honoré, walked solitary Robespierre, neat in white wig, breeches, sky-blue stockings. I followed him into the Assembly, crowded with delegates, the galleries shouting bread! bread! He took his seat near Danton. Mystery man Mirabeau sat alone on the tribune behind subtle-faced Talleyrand in the chair. Gentlemen, the bishop of Autun said, after two years we have accomplished miracles: the old way of life is shattered: the old form of government, territorial divisions, fiscal and judicial systems, army and navy, relations between church and state, laws regulating landed property—all these old things are gone beyond recall: we have issued the Declaration of the Rights of Man, proclaimed civil equality and freedom of conscience, reformed the criminal law, established a just system of taxation. The representatives of the nation thundered applause for their own achievements but the galleries shouted bread! bread! Otto Weber rose grimly in the highest row and shouted: What about us? Robespierre, pale, thin, ascetic, left the Assembly, and when I rose to follow him Professor Boucher handed me a telegram: MUST RETURN UNISTATES PLEASE COVER THIS CABLE DAILY COLLECT REGARDS HAGUE. Throughout the hall voices thundered enthusiasm: the year One of history! the Golden Age begins!

In the small room Mirabeau lay dying, his face ravaged by erotic excess, political disappointment. Smiling, he said: there's one step from Capitol to Tarpean rock; support my head, professor, the strongest in France; I wish I could leave it to you. From the outside

we heard artillery. The funeral feast of Achilles, he said. Monarchy is buried with me; the factions can only destroy its relics: ah, kings will pass, privileges will pass and the people will remain.

Music filled the heavy fog and when all cleared I stood where the Place de la Grève crosses the Rue de la Vannerie. Before the grocer's stood the lamppost; from one side hung Foullon, from the other François the baker, men who had robbed the people of bread. The immense crowd carried a huge placard: *Rogues object to the lamppost: (signed) Camille Desmoulins*. Camille himself, young, full of ardor, leaped upon a table, addressed the crowd: Yes, my dear fellow citizens, we shall all be free! There will be no civil war. We are the strongest, the most numerous: the young take fire, the old blush for the past. Hurrah! the crowd shouted: long live Camille, prosecutor of the lamppost! Camille descended from the table; the crowd vanished; we were alone. What do you think, professor? he said. I am getting married today! She is beautiful. Won't you come?

We entered the church of Saint-Sulpice. Lovely and young, Lucille waited at the altar. The witnesses stood by—Pétion, Brissot, Mercier, Brulart, Robespierre. My father appeared at my elbow; smiling, he took my hand. Look, Camille cried with joy, how glorious to have these good, great friends! He kissed Lucille and said: Where is our friend Danton? He could not come, said Robespierre. Camille embraced his comrades one after the other; tears came into his eyes. Cry if you want, said Robespierre. My father pressed my arm and said: Look well, my son: soon they will attack Camille for those tears; upbraid him for coming to church; claim this marriage of love was for money; Robespierre and Camille will send Brissot to the guillotine; then Robespierre will send Camille and his bride: history moves mysteriously its wonders to perform. The bells rang in the happiness of the world and Uncle Peter in vestments started to perform the marriage ceremony, and Robespierre moved through empty space and I followed him to the Jacobins.

The club was crowded with simple, strong people from the faubourgs. The orator on the platform spoke with remarkable force: It is you, O holy Revolution, who has brought us happiness, you whom I should love with all my strength, defend with my life blood, that you may triumph over tyrants banded against you! O holy liberty, O holy equality, who make it possible for me to say: I am a simple workman yet my son may become magistrate, legislator, shipmaster, general! The walls shook with applause. Voices cried out from the crowd: A republic! Let the people rule! Let liberty's flag fly over London, Madrid, Berlin!

Robespierre sat next to me among the Jacobins and said quietly: Let us swear in new members. Behind the speaker's stand on the

platform, my father banged the chairman's gavel: silence. Otto Weber stepped forward, took the oath: I swear to maintain with all my might the unity and indivisibility of the Republic; I swear to recognize as my brother any just man, any friend of mankind, whatever his color or country; I swear I shall never have any other temple than that of reason, other altars than that of the Fatherland, other priests than our legislators, other cults than that of liberty, equality, fraternity. Long live the Republic! Long live the Mountain! Tumultuous cheers and shouts echoed through the hall. Long live the sans-culottes! Long live the martyrs of liberty and equality! Long live the sacred Revolution! Otto Weber, facing my father, raised his right hand and continued the oath: I call down anathema upon kings, tyrants, dictators, triumvirs, false defenders, false protectors of the people; anathema upon any who under the title of chief, stadholder, general, prince, or any other name whatsoever should usurp a superiority, a pre-eminence over his fellow citizens. In the hush that followed, my father raised his eyes and prayed: O Marat, whose memory shall always be dear to us, watch from heaven over that liberty which you so courageously defended.

And now, said Robespierre, let us proceed with the purification of our ranks. My father banged for order and said: Come, citizens, make a clean breast of everything at the bar of this assembly, this tribunal of man's conscience and the justice of the people; prove your orthodoxy; tell us what you have done for the Revolution or against it. You there, citizen! A Jacobin looked up. Tell us, my father said, is it true you abused the Mountain by calling it a handful of Maratists? Yes, said the citizen contritely. Expelled! said my father. And you there, Citizen Proum: do you admit you eat habitually with servants of a former aristocrat, a *ci-devant*? Yes, said Citizen Proum. Expelled! my father said. What about you, Citizen Masse? I confess my crime against the Revolution, said Masse; I delayed bringing my produce to market. Expelled! said my father. I consorted with priests, Citizen Sellier called out. What! my father exclaimed. Let me explain, Citizen Sellier pleaded, I was trying to convert these priests to the Revolution. Is that so? said my father: Expelled! The chorus of citizens caught up the refrain: Expelled! Expelled!

Night had fallen. It was too dark to see anything. I went out into the street and felt the black air with my hands. A light gleamed; a little old man came up with a lantern. Where are we, Diogenes? I said. You are mistaken, the old man said, I am the philosopher Immanuel Kant, seeking the cipher to the Cosmopolitical Plan for a Universal Society; if we find it, we can rely upon nature to produce the man to solve it. Are you sure nature will produce that man? I

said. She always does, said Kant; she produced Kepler to guess the eccentric orbits of the planets, Newton to clarify the universal principle of the natural order, and your humble servant to discover the Categorical Imperative; now she is going to produce the man for my Universal History on a Cosmopolitical Plan: the idea always precedes the man; I've got the idea; all we need is the man.

We had reached the pool parlor and here upon the waves of air I floated in alone. Billiard balls rolled along the green felt like the thunder of cannon; in the adjoining room the young man was deep in a book. He was terribly thin, peculiar, ugly, awkward, emaciated, sallow, miserably dressed in the uniform of a lieutenant of artillery on half pay. As I came in, he said harshly: what do you want, professor? Yes, I look like a vagabond; that's how a revolutionary ought to look in his youth; later it will all be different—if I survive. You expect to be killed in battle? I said. No, he said, but things have been going badly; I've thought of suicide: what nonsense: I'll fight, but only for extreme stakes: aut Caesar, aut nihil: throne or scaffold! His penetrating gray eyes bored right through me. Don't misunderstand, professor, he said; I am a man who loves freedom more than anything else on earth. Fate has decreed I should be Napoleon; I'd rather be Leonidas, Cato, Brutus, a liberator of the people. What are you reading there, lieutenant? I asked. Rousseau's *Social Contract*, he said: ah, what a book! I read it over and over again; it's my Bible, the sacred book of democracy; it speaks to me of things in my blood, things I've known since childhood: simplicity, naturalness, freedom, above all equality. I listened to him from the typewriter on which I knocked out a cable for Hague's New York papers: QUOTE EYE FAVOR EQUALITY UNQUOTE LIEUTENANT BONAPARTE TOLD YOUR CORRESPONDENT IN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW TODAY QUOTE BUT EQUALITY IS ONE THING WHEN YOU THINK OF YOUR SUPERIORS AND SOMETHING ELSE AGAIN WHEN YOU THINK OF YOUR INFERIORS STOP EYE THINK EYE AM AS GOOD AS ANYBODY ON EARTH BUT DISLIKE IDEA THAT EYE AM NO BETTER UNQUOTE SCHUMAN. There was tumult outside. We went into the street, watched the crowd surging by with cries of bread! bread! Napoleon waved his hat shouting, Long live the Revolution! Then he turned to me saying: the Revolution attracts me terribly: I'm staking everything on it and myself: when in Rome, do as the Romans: better devour than be devoured. He turned to the crowd and shouted: Look, look, citizens! Here I am! The crowd ignored him; the endless mass billowed toward the tocsin ringing faintly at the far end of the night. They don't know me yet, he said, but I've already done something: I'm by way of being a Jacobin, a friend of Robespierre's brother: I saved the Republic at Toulon: not books or speeches, professor, *cannon!* Would

you believe it? The opposition called in foreign powers! Treachery, treachery everywhere, as in all revolutions. The first coalition is trying to crush the Republic and what happens? General Dumouriez deserts to the Austrians! But war is on; I can wish for nothing better!

Heavy with images surging in swift disorder, my dream broke. I became aware of the prison cell around me; then, remembering what dawn held in store, I fled back to sleep and found myself climbing higher and higher up the Semmering; and yet I was in Paris and a glamorous haze filled the whole, wide world; time stood still and through the clouds which floated along endless space the tocsin rang wildly and great crowds rushed by in one flash of majestic action after another: they were taking the Bastille in a great burst of popular hope and joy; and now came the insurrection of the women; the beating of kettles, pans, drums; carts trailing cannon along the streets of Paris carrying brown-haired Theroign in pike and helmet, and the mountain on which I was climbing shook with the cry of the women: to Versailles for bread and the king! And through the mist I saw the royal carriage rumbling toward Varennes, haunted by the crushing shadow of the perfidious iron chest; and as the people arrested the Capets, the vapor became so heavy I had to sit down on a rock and inhale the dizzy air of immeasurable height portentous with great events mysterious in the rolling nimbus of endless time. And now I sat in the Convention before my typewriter banging out a cable for Hague's newspapers. The tumult was enormous as orators hurled accusation and counteraccusation: PARIS 1792 FACTIONAL STRIFE RENT CONVENTION TODAY AS EX-JACOBINS PRESENTLY CALLED GIRONDINS FIERCELY ASSAILED DANTON ROBESPIERRE OTHER JACOBINS STOP ATTACKED SEPTEMBER MASSACRES COMMA PARIS COMMUNE REPRESENTING POOREST SECTIONS STOP ACCUSED ROBESPIERRE SEEKING DICTATORSHIP COMMA DEMANDED PROVINCIAL GUARD PROTECT CONVENTION COMMA URGED DISSOLUTION COMMUNE PARAGRAPH TEMPORARILY FACTIONAL STRUGGLE SUBORDINATE TO DEBATE ON DEPOSITION EXECUTION KING STOP YOUR CORRESPONDENT BELIEVES OVERWHELMING MAJORITY WILL VOTE DEATH STOP SCHUMAN. The tumult in the Convention grew louder, bolder; the majesty of the conflict filled the world. Robespierre, his green eyes surveying the hall, shouted from the platform: Louis must die that the nation may live! Your Declaration of the Rights of Man seems not for the poor but for the rich. Citizens! The armies of the Vendée, Brittany, Coblenz are marching against Paris! The feudal masters arm because you are humanity's vanguard! Ah, the great powers of Europe fight you and all base, depraved persons in France support them!

Let us build an army of sans-culottes and workingmen; let it investigate Paris, keep moderates in check, occupy all posts, inspire all enemies with terror!

I stood in the Place de la Concorde with Professor Boucher and Babette and the multitude which filled the square was immeasurable. Hearing I could not see the tumbrils rumbling through mist like thunder and somewhere in the center of the square was the guillotine, invisible, implacable: terrible avenger of the Republic: dread guardian of the people. I felt utterly sick at heart. Babette embraced me, weeping bitterly. It's horrible, horrible, she cried, and fled into the vast multitude which vanished completely into the heavy sky of the Semmering. What rot! Professor Boucher exclaimed, his face red with anger. This will ruin your mind beyond repair: why aren't you in class? You'll miss the lecture! The campus of the Sorbonne was deserted. I entered the amphitheater of my first dream. How still everything was. The classroom was empty. I was alone. But there—good Lord, how terrible!—hanging side by side on the rear wall were the severed heads of the great, and they were alive. I watched them from the middle of the room, transfixed with horror. The lion's head of Danton said: Foreign foes invade our land, the south is in revolt and this is the time Brissot's Girondins accuse Marat, attack the Commune, foment insurrection, create disunity: the issue before the people is simple and terrible: unite or perish! Let the Gironde die that the Republic may live! Piously the severed heads of Vergniaud's Girondins, hanging weirdly from the wall, sang: *Better death than slavery: that is the motto of the French!* The head of Saint-Just, pale, young, beautiful, said: we want the Republic, but it will cost us dear. Yes, said the head of Vergniaud, the Revolution like Saturn devours its own children. Ah, Liberty! said the head of Mme. Roland. Tears streamed down the severed head of Camille Desmoulins, which cried: my God! it is I who kill them! This, exclaimed the head of Barnave, is my reward for loving liberty! From the far end of the wall, Robespierre's ascetic head gazed sternly at Danton. False idol, it said, you became rotten long ago! You deceive the people! You are in the pay of the foreign foe! Die! and Danton's head said with proud irony: you saved my life once, Robespierre, protected me against the accusation leading to the Tarpean rock; you praised my courage, talent, revolutionary service. That was yesterday, said Robespierre's head; today you corruptly weaken the Republic; you must die! Be it so, Danton's head said; I've served my country too well; if my life's a burden to her, I'll give her my body to devour! My name is linked to all the revolutionary institutions; I fashioned the instruments of my own death; but you, Robespierre, will be dragged down by me; you'll

follow me to the scaffold: Ah, better to be a poor fisherman than meddle with the government of men! . . . And now the head of Saint-Just young, beautiful, severe, declared: once Camille said I carried my head on my shoulders like the Holy Sacrament: I promised then I would make him carry his like St. Denis—in his hand: I'm ready to keep that promise: he aids Danton's corruption, defends suspects, calls for a committee of clemency; he wishes to halt the Terror which alone saves the Republic from enemies at home and abroad; he must die under the knife. And the head of Robespierre added: his wife Lucille must die, too. Yes, said Camille's head to Robespierre, you never showed me as much friendship as on the day of my arrest; I am thirty-three, an age fatal to revolutionists, the age of the sans-culotte Jesus: ah, I should have kept out of politics, spent my life loving Lucille and writing verses! The face of Lucille flushed with joy, tears came into its young eyes and it exclaimed: I die but say of me *she loved!* A shot rang out. There was the dreadful noise of breaking bone. Robespierre's jaw began to bleed. A voice cried: the blood of Danton chokes you! the guillotine waits for you and Saint-Just! A bloodstained cloth covered Robespierre's face; it spoke with difficulty and pride saying: all previous revolutions had for their sole object a change of dynasty; ours is the first founded on the rights of humanity, the principles of justice; the others needed only ambition, ours demands virtue; ignorance and strength absorbed the others in a new species of despotism; ours, which originated in justice, can only live by it! Through the air the disembodied hand of the executioner seized Robespierre's head, lifted it high and bleeding; a terrible cry broke from its lips, the first sign of suffering the condemned had given. And suddenly there was a rumble of cannon; church bells clamored through the autumn; the walls of the amphitheater trembled, fell and vanished utterly with all its heads; and through the open space which now surrounded me an invisible chorus chanted: Salute, Ninth of Thermidor, day of deliverance! You will purify the sanguinary sun! For the second time you will illuminate for France the rays of Liberty!

There was the platform and reading stand and the floor with rows and rows of empty seats; and in the vast surrounding spaces of autumn the Semmering rose with all its flaming foliage to the skies. I sat down bewildered and Professor Boucher came in, his eyes furious under the heavy brows. Taking his place behind the speaker's stand he faced the empty classroom and began his lecture: PARIS EXCLUSIVE HAGUE PUBLICATIONS BY SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT PAUL SCHUMAN PARAGRAPH QUOTE AT THE END OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY THERE WERE FOUR FRENCH REVOLUTIONS UNQUOTE PROFESSOR ANDRE BOUCHER NOTED FRENCH HISTORIAN TO-

DAY TOLD VAST AUDIENCE AT SORBONNE CELEBRATING ONE HUNDRED FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY BASTILLE DAY SCHUMAN.

Professor Boucher came toward me, angrier than I had ever seen him, his deep, wonderful eyes scorching me with rebuke. You disappoint me, Schuman, he said; you're a fool; your mind is going to pieces; you missed the whole point; you've learned nothing; I'm going to flunk you; I'll expel you from the university. From the surrounding hills voices echoed: Expelled! Expelled! and my heart contracted painfully and I wanted to die and the amphitheater became tremendously crowded with people. The globe whirled under my feet; then all was right again. On the platform, in seats of honor, sat Professor Boucher, my old friend Hague, Babette; there was my father, holding Mother's hand tenderly and near them Uncle Peter; on one side of the second row I saw Professor Gross and on the other Siegfried; Otto and Emma Weber and their little daughter and Teddy Hoffman occupied rear seats. Everywhere around me the amphitheater became filled with students I had taught in Vienna. All faces were radiant in that stadium under the open vault of heaven; the music of *Orpheus and Eurydice* filled the air; the mood of sublime exaltation was subdued but sure at last; and behind the speaker's stand there rose the long-pursued figure of Citizen Condorcet. A great hush fell over the world. From the depths of the Semmering there rose on my left the Pantheon of History covered with a heavy curtain of red and gold on which was inscribed *Of Human Freedom*. On a signal from Condorcet, Otto Weber pulled the cord and the Pantheon's curtain rose on granite statues of Mirabeau, Marat, Danton, Desmoulins, Robespierre, Saint-Just—all, all were there, the sculptured shadows of a reality which history could never wholly recapture; and a great serenity filled the world. On the platform Condorcet began speaking; he looked at me as if replying to my old question explaining the faith that had sustained to the end his love of the future to which he belonged; and the words he uttered were not his own but those of a great French poet: Never perhaps on earth, at any period since the commencement of the Christian era, did any country produce, in so short a time, such an eruption of ideas, men, natures, characters, geniuses, talents, catastrophes, crimes and virtues as during these convulsive throes of the social and political future called by the name of France: it was as if the earth were in labor to produce a progressive order of societies, and made an effort of fecundity comparable to the energetic work of regeneration which providence desired to accomplish: light shone from every point of the horizon at once; darkness fell back: prejudices were cast off: conscience was freed: tyrannies trembled: the people rose: thrones crumbled: this deadly struggle for the cause of

human reason acquired for the world inalienable truths, enlarged the domain of mind: the heads of these men fell one by one, some justly, others unjustly, but they fell in consummation of the work: the idea soars above the instruments, as the ever-pure cause soars over the horrors of the battlefield. Beside me Babette, her eyes transfixed with light, wept tears of joy and wisdom. The history of the Revolution, Condorcet went on, is glorious and sad as the morrow of a victory, full of faith like ancient drama in which, while the narrator gives the recital, the chorus of the people sings the glory, bewails the victims and raises a hymn of consolation and hope. As Condorcet uttered the last words, his radiant face raised to heaven, a mighty chorus of male voices thundered *Allons, enfants de la patrie, le jour de gloire est arrivé!*: and in the awe-inspiring silence that followed nothing was to be seen but the vast blue of deserted space through which a lone, invisible drum slowly heaved *one-two! one-two!* and I woke in the darkness of my cell and heard outside my door the deadly beat of the sentry's boots assail the night, frightful threshold of tomorrow's execution.

When I fell asleep again I was climbing new, loftier levels of the Semmering; the lone drum became many; trumpets cried out to the blazing dawn rolling across the plateau; from the dazzling curtain of light General Bonaparte emerged with sword and banner rushing down the plains of a dying world reborn anew followed by cheering battalions: and the cannons thundered out of their mouths the irresistible explosives of the Rights of Man. And now billowing across the plains came a great undulating sea of blood surging around the general's boots and from his celestial eyes the bright rays of victory flashed with lightning: a million bodies floated dead upon the carmine waves and from the shores peoples hurled their chains into the foam and cheered till the sky reverberated freedom's thunder.

The marble staircase rising from the sanguinary waters was broad and lofty; the First Consul marched from step to step in solitary grandeur and my shadow followed him to Rousseau's grave. Look, said the First Consul pointing to the tombstone, here lies a wicked man: without him there would have been no French Revolution, no Bonaparte: better for the peace of France if neither he nor I had existed: I should have been a scientist like Newton. The batteries thundered; the neighing of horses wild in combat whistled through the air like winds insane and the cries of dying men applauded the ascending boots of General Newton; and from the overwhelming effulgence of the marble summit rose the great cathedral where the crowd was enormous. The bells rang majestically as

Napoleon turned to my shadow saying: Still opposed to me are the republicans, cranks who believe Europe will look on quietly while a republic is being established: you will soon see what a lure court etiquette will exercise on émigrés: the old familiar forms of address: soldiers and people are on my side: a man unable to rule under these conditions is an idiot: Fouché! The ex-Jacobin terrorist, imperial police minister Fouché, bowed in treacherous homage. Quick! the First Consul said: arrest, deport, clear out these dolts and ideologues: great deeds must be done! Leaning over the desk he signed the parchment: Napoleon I, Emperor of the French Republic: and all the way down the wide marble staircase a forest of millions knelt submitting to order, the fruits of the Revolution: and the immense balustrades slid along the scales of hierarchy. Striding to the high altar of the cathedral whose myriad candles lit this vast banquet of power, his face pale and handsome like that of Augustus, the emperor took her by the hand with whom he had lived in revolutionary sin, to whom he was now united by the returning church triumphant. The golden bees hummed on the imperial mantle; the tremendous multitude stood awed and silent; the Pope held out the pagan circlet of golden laurel leaves which General Brutus rudely seized and placed upon his own anointed head: and now he sat with a majesty unseen in a thousand years on a piece of wood covered with satin from which he could govern half the world, and whispered to my shadow kneeling at the foot of the throne: if only my father could see me now! And from the wide folds of the imperial mantle there came tumbling in glamorous profusion down the broad marble staircase of hierarchy marshals, generals, grand chamberlains, dukes, princes, cardinals, kings, and relatives: and a single frown from the mighty brow of Caesar divus forbade the singing of the *Marseillaise* as a hussar murmured through the fading aura of his Jacobin past: a hundred thousand men perished that this might never happen. His Imperial Majesty condescended the staircase, slapped the hussar on the back, calling him by his first name and said: Don't be jealous of me like those harebrained ideologues Chateaubriand, de Staël, Constant: the law of Christ and Caesar is the same: to live, forgive!

On the secret winding staircase of night leading to the lovely buttocks of Duchâtel his Imperial Majesty was caught with his stockings down and the frustrated charms of the empress rebuked our hero saying: Omnipotent impotence! you overrun the world with blood because you are a failure in your own tent! His Majesty observed that whoever is Caesar need not be Lothario, and glided down the palace balustrade in full uniform out of the magic case-ment opening on the cheers of perilous grenadiers who crowded the vast battlefield below with victorious bayonets. Thanks to the em-

peror's Corsican sagacity, foresight and absolute will our artillery blasted immense bubbles which burst aloft into skies of blood. Burn the bridge, charge, assault, pursue, cut down! Rain fell in torrents; for eight days and nights the emperor did not take off his boots, saying: What is the death of a million men to me? But Nelson still breathed on the divan in the Café Trafalgar as the band struck up *Britons never, never, never shall be slaves*. Anchor, Hardy, anchor! Kiss me! Thank God, I've done my duty! Peace; immediate, glorious, fruitful. Between battles, potentates embraced on theatrical rafts; diplomats waltzed in the arms of each other's concubines; they scraped yesterday's blood from today's gaming table and under the sign of the double-cross the high contracting parties solemnly concluded tomorrow's broken treaty. Ring, ring, O cathedral bells, tolling *Te Deum* for his Majesty, vicarious requiem calling school-boys into the mounting flames of battle. *Question*: What are the duties of Christians with reference to the princes by whom they are governed, and what are our special duties toward Napoleon I, our emperor? *Answer*: Christians owe to the princes by whom they are governed, and we owe especially to Napoleon I, our emperor, love, respect, obedience, fidelity, military service, the tribute ordered for the preservation and defense of the empire and his throne; we also owe him fervent prayers for his health and the temporal safety of the state. The transatlantic telephone rang with Hague's voice editorially demanding: For Christ's sake, Schuman! What's going on? PARIS QUOTE NAPOLEON IS EXPRESSION OF ALL THAT IS REASONABLE LEGITIMATE AND EUROPEAN IN THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT UNQUOTE JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE FAMED WEIMAR POET TODAY TOLD YOUR CORRESPONDENT UNEXCLUSIVELY PARAGRAPH MEANTIME CIVIL CODE SPREADING ACROSS CONTINENT DESTROYS FEUDAL REMAINS COMMA DISTRIBUTES REMAINING FRUITS OF REVOLUTION COMMA CUTS DOWN POPULAR POLITICAL RIGHTS CURTAILS FREE SPEECH WHILE RETAINING ASSERTION MEN ARE BORN AND REMAIN EQUAL IN RIGHTS AND MAY NOT BE PERSECUTED FOR OPINIONS PROVIDED THEIR EXPRESSION UNDISTURBS PUBLIC ORDER PARAGRAPH ADD SPECIAL BY PROFESSOR ANDRE BOUCHER QUOTE BECAUSE NAPOLEON GIVES PRACTICAL FORM TO ACHIEVEMENTS OF REVOLUTION AND ENSURES PUBLIC ORDER NECESSARY FOR THEIR CONTINUANCE COMMA MAJORITY FRENCHMEN ENDURE SACRIFICES HIS POLICIES EXACT UNQUOTE SCHUMAN.

From the window of the university I watched the immense plain rock to and fro with the advance outflanking the enemy's attack. Long live the emperor! shouted a thousand fractured thighs as death and the Civil Code pursued uhlans into the black abyss of time. Artillery broke the bridge; the cold was intense; soldiers leaped into

the ice which cannon balls broke under their feet; with cries of despair taken for granted in authoritative circles the waters engulfed these rational creatures in uniform; and across the capitals, visible everywhere now, imperial wedding bells proclaimed that everything yields to power. The soldiers cheered the Emperor of the West, leaping by millions into the grave while Rousseau's constant reader looked down his nose at Europe's crowned crowd presenting their royal homage in melancholy brilliance.

The mists of time lifted me high in the air, and when I fell painlessly into the little bistro there was only one table and the two men drinking chocolate with Schlagobers were disputing the character of contemporary existence with true Schlamperei as I joined them completely unseen like Claude Rains in a film of the invisible man and listened to Obermann mediate on the original nature of homo sapiens. Pale, sensitive as a cocoon, Obermann contracted his sideburns contemptuously toward the drooping folds of his mouth and the romantic exile looked down upon the pistol in his hands, conveniently unloaded. All sensibility, he confided to the world at large at two cents a word, I feel without acting, paralyzed in brain and will by the turmoil, discipline and despotism of this age of military might and mathematics. No, no, no! I refuse to crawl step by step up the marble stairway of hierarchy, bootlicking princes for the privilege of despising charwomen! Too weak to cope with political parties and military machines, I can still write and love and there is one realm where I am completely free: I can take my own life. Every year Napoleon sacrifices thousands of lives for his power and glory: why can't I take my own? Obermann rose with the unsteady dignity of a man compelled to earn a living by his pen and said to his indifferent companion: Charles, look upon all that passes and perishes as of no importance; perhaps we are created only to perish; then let us at least do nothing to deserve our fate! The man addressed as Charles remarked sardonically: Everywhere the most pitiful reality corresponds with the most highfaluting lingo; poverty is born of superabundance; civilized vices are complex, ambiguous, equivocal, hypocritical; and the young Lyons broker overwhelmed the prevailing fiasco of phrases with mordant sarcasm. The café became crowded with marshals, generals, colonels, cardinals, princes, grenadiers, geometricians, doctors and marionettes. Leaping upon the solitary table, Obermann waved his single-barreled instrument of destruction and cried to all and sundry: Take first place, you who desire fame of the moment, the admiration of society; you who are rich in ideas which last a day and books which serve a party! Take first place, seducers and seduced! From the heart of the crowd incipient steam engines hissed disapproval; the man called Charles

seemed preoccupied, unable to grasp the febrile harangue of the painter of Salzburg whose face changed utterly as he exclaimed: Political circumstances have given us the education of Achilles: we have been fed on the blood and marrow of lions: the government leaves nothing to chance and determines the future: the new generation knows that Werther's pistol and the executioner's ax have made a clearing among us: we demand the cloisters of old! The crowd's ambiguous applause disturbed the bistro as unseen violins chanted the *Emperor Concerto*. Obermann pressed the pistol to his undecided brain and fired a salvo of silence: slowly the muzzle exhaled a most enchanting serial of fragrances and melodies invoking remote places where a voluptuous ballet performed the harmonious mysteries of existence.

Alas, these broke in surprise to pieces under the remorseless clatter of cavalry hot in pursuit of the fleeing foe obliging the emperor with sixty battles, major and minor; and the crowd fled through the walls as riding behind the victorious troops his Majesty entered upon a white horse unscrupulously clean. Napoleon's beautiful eyes of terror devoured the painter of Salzburg and the roar of cannon drowned the lamentations and hopes of Europe: the giant map which obscured the world changed shape and color like the mad rotations of a kaleidoscope hunting prisms and through the deeps snows of an unconquerable land the astonished emperor pushed his return trip across the dead recruits of his army and heard far off the crackling flames of sacrifice with which a great people destroyed and saved their capital and independence.

But where was Peggy, adorable heart of love and hope? The Semmering rose incalculably high into the clouds; all was luminous and clear around my unyielding climb and now along the sky telegraph wires lined selected space like mondrians; the crossbeams floated swiftly on the neoplastic air waves and from the suspicious wind there fluttered into my hand, the paper white with editorial fury, the following cable collect: SCHUMAN ARE YOU JOURNALIST OR MOUSE STOP WHY THE HELL DO YOU MISS GREATEST REVOLUTION SINCE AMOEBA BECAME MAN STOP WHY DID YOU FAIL REPORT SPINNING JENNY POWER LOOM LOCOMOTIVE STOP YOU CAN STICK YOUR AGE OF GOLD IN THE USUAL PLACE STOP LOOK AT AGE OF COAL IRON RAW MATERIALS MARKETS MACHINES BIG TOWNS BIG MONEY BIG STARVATION FACTORIES UNEMPLOYMENT STRIKES LABOR UNIONS MORE TO COME HAGUE: and across the open crags of the Semmering, heavy with rain and dusk, loud with artillery, suffering and hope, the Battle of the Nations confirmed the doom Bonaparte had already divined in the smoke of Smolensk. Night fell with a dark hush on the horizon. Through the trees I saw my father coming and with

him the man called Charles to whom Obermann had addressed in the bistro his futile discourse of romantic despair. Imperturbable, ironic, serene, this man leaped to my father's shoulders against the unending sky and the Lyons broker, heir of Waldenses, ignited in the clearing firmament the first star of a new faith whose expanding light remorselessly laid bare the material and moral misery of earth below; and now, the trumpets announcing dawn, the majestic folds of the mountain trembled with multitudes of hope crying *bread! land! peace!* I looked into the valley below and caught far away the faintly visible shadows of Damon and Pythias, meeting bearded in Brussels, the giant Gemini plotting the probable graph of the world's future spiraling with calculated assurance toward a predestined goal. Father! Father! I cried: don't abandon me! But everybody was gone and I read a telegram urgently forwarded collect: ADD SCHUMAN WHAT ABOUT PHOTOS OF LAPLACE AND HIS DYNAMICAL NEBULOSITY ALSO LYELLS SEAS RIVERS VOLCANOES EVOLVING THE GLOBES RESTLESS STRUCTURE THEREBY EXPANDING RECEIVED COSMOGONIES BY MILLION PERCENT STOP WHY DID YOU UNARRANGE BUNSEN BROADCAST OF SPECTROSCOPIC PROBE INTO SUNS CHEMISTRY STOP DID YOU AT LEAST TRY OBTAIN COLOR PLATES OF CHEVALIER DELAMARCKS GIRAFFE BROWSING FIRST FOLIAGE OF EVOLUTION STOP NAPOLEONS MISAPPLIED JACOBIN ENERGY MAY FASCINATE CAMPUS NITWITS LIKE YOU BUT WHERE IS YOUR SUNDAY FEATURE ON CAPTIVE COSMIC ENERGY PRESTIDIGITATING BOILERS REFRIGERATORS RADIOS AIRPLANES MORE TO COME HAGUE.

I stood in the solitude of dawn and watched along the horizon the serene swell of a tired sea: the *Bellerophon*, her great exile on deck meditating his own myth, nosed her British way into the waves of time, and in the streets which rose around me the exhausted people unwelcomed a plump returning Bourbon and told their children to eat grass. And now, down the last deserted boulevard I found the Café Zum Ritter where a lonely, unhappy thinker, far from the sight of regimental banners and the sound of cannon, wrote with the aid of books from the Weimar library that Napoleon after all gave concentrated, untrammelled utterance to that assertion of ego and lust for boundless life which other mortals, frightened by their own futility, concealed behind compulsory masks. The philosopher downed his last stein of introspective beer and tearing from his eyes the dark bandage of habit climbed with my inquisitive shadow behind him above the aetiological boulevard into the dizzy tower of speculation. Poking his head out the window he whistled for the magic bird of metaphysic to rescue us all, O Lord, from the haunting specter of materialism. Come, professor, said Schopenhauer bitterly to my inquisitive shadow: let us go to the movies: and there in the

elegant darkness of the Palais de Cinema Moderne he sat beside me as we watched charging across the silver screen the supercolossal hyperanimated all-star billion-dollar technicolor fantasia adapted by seven screenwriters from the Burgtheater hit *The World as Will and Idea*. The final twist of the plot dispelled reason's claim to priority and exposed the limitations of science: there was plenty of universal action, everlasting and omnipresent; and the multicolored sequence of sight and sound ended in a fadeout of irresistible glamour revealing behind the tranquil surface of matter the glow of hidden spiritual gunfights: in the final clinch Mickey Mouse playing god proclaimed that in the beginning was appetite, passion and will. A stage show followed; the mighty chorus of mixed voices hailed the redemption of man from sensual bonds; and customers lucky enough to win at bingo received consolation prizes in the form of art and the ascetic life redolent between the immeasurable nipples of Nirvana. This film festival of the century concluded with a newsreel foreshadowing the forthcoming sensational double play from Id to Ego to Superego pulled off despite rain amidst the clangor of heavy gate receipts on the foreconscious diamond of Vienna. The lights went up and the manager, appearing on the stage in full café regalia, asked loudly: Is there a doctor of philosophy in the house? When the crowd ironically pushed me forward he handed me

ADD SCHUMAN
BLAST YOUR HIDE STOP WHERE IS EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT OF FARADAYS IONS TRANSCENDING THE MEDLEY OF NATIONAL ANTHEMS ALSO OF LUMINIFEROUS ETHER PROPAGATING LIGHT AS ELECTROMAGNETIC PHENOMENON ALSO OF DESTRUCTIBLE UNETERNAL CHEMICAL ATOMS STOP YOU ARE MISSING WITH ACADEMIC PRECISION ALL TIME HIGH IN HUMAN ADVANCE STOP GO BACK TO YOUR HISTORICAL DIME NOVELS STOP YOURE FIRED WITH BEST REGARDS HAGUE: and suddenly the sea roared through the walls and subsided on a vast clear plain and the emperor's black-draped deathbed stood under the open sky of a nostalgic Chirico.

The hero, flat on his back, wore the blue cloak of Marengo and the three-cornered hat; a crucifix reposed on his breast; the white curtains around the camp bed were sustained by his silver eagle. The awed crowd stood by in silence. Babette handed him a glass of water, and he said; Thank you, chérie! I smoked a butt observant in a corner of the field. Professor Gross sat shiva by the ruined gates of the ghetto lamenting: The emperor, the emperor is taken! The hero was seeing his last vision: Ah, Paris, my Paris: I see the streets, the people: yes, crowds of people: space? time? aren't they in our power? a little imagination, friends! I should have been a scientist like Newton. And now I see the little island where I was born: I seem to walk its earth, inhale its beautiful fragrance: when I was a little

boy my mother told me people are born free: there is no greater crime than to deprive them of freedom: mother, where are you? mother! Mother Letizia! The emperor's dead face smiled peacefully. A sense of immense loss filled the earth. The crowd wept softly. Voices whispered: he is beautiful: and young: he seems almost alive. An English soldier of the island guard raised his little son saying: Look well, my child, he was the greatest man in the whole world. And through the hushed air above the hero's alabaster brow came Peggy's voice disembodied and low with assurance, beautiful with the justice of England's requiem: I know too late, since thou and France are in the dust, that Virtue owns a more eternal foe than Force and Fraud: old Custom, Legal Crime, and bloody Faith, the foulest birth of time.

Oh, how the voice of the most beloved filled the world with joy! I ran into the vast expanse of light and climbed the mountain green with the foliage and hope of spring. It was long and long and long; the hours poured down my back like sweat; but she was somewhere, the everlasting goal of private adoration, and I plunged into the horizon of factory stacks and dynamos which roared through smoke along the ambiguous morning, and the trains battered their way into the noon of unseen years as an army of telephones, radios and long-range weapons embarked upon the conquest of space.

But there, there on the high plateau clean with the sun and free with the air of love and solitude she stood smiling to me, her face radiant above the obstinate crag which I now lightly overleaped into her arms. In the kiss that sealed our being with flames of certainty and elation our souls transcended forgotten absence; each greeted the other with a love unknown to earth, unequivocal and pure in the endless radiance of time which flooded us like the cleansing power of a benediction. I looked into the glory of her face and the world stood still; space was unable to utter the immense tremor of delight pervading every crevice of existence which to live in love like this was blessed beyond all secular prayer. Then, as hand in hand we turned to look at the valley below, the rumble of darkness rose from the deeps; shadows of terror to come lifted their heads like resurrected dinosaurs devouring the heart of man. Vast multitudes filled the abyss below, and the clamor of men and machines mingled in a sea of blood which arched its relentless back toward the lofty level of splendor on which we stood: and the earth shook to its foundations with the shout of invisible peoples calling through time: bread! bread! And when the gathering tumult reached the utmost visible horizon at the very last rim of light that surrounded our harmonious reunion, a circle leaped into being with one strange cry that was the cry of a newborn child.

And now Peggy, her wide gray eyes sublime with faith, hope and courage, looked into my face and said in the voice of unconditional love which opens the last layers of the heart: O beloved, total happiness of my life, be firm! When they learn at all, men can only learn from their own experience. Then she spoke exalted words heard somewhere in waking life: These agonies may be of our own making: let us learn to endure them, though they seem endless: let us do this for our own sake and for the sake of man's future upon this earth: let us learn the secret of forgiving even the most terrible wrongs and to do so without weakness or regret: endurance and forgiveness will nourish our strength: and we shall need all the strength in the world: for our most sacred duty is to defy power: no matter how vast that power may be, no matter if it appears omnipotent, still we must defy it when it becomes a thing of evil: therein lies salvation for us all: endurance of pain, defiance of evil, unyielding love for the good: and when at last we attain this virtue, wisdom and love, then—and then alone—can we emerge from the terrible darkness of despair and begin to hope again: and this will not be the vague longing which masquerades as hope: no, this will be true hope: the hope that is so certain of itself and of the world that it will create out of its own wreck the very things which it desires because they are good: armed with this hope, no evil can really touch us: for we shall not abandon our goal of transmuting hell into heaven: we shall not falter in our struggle for justice: we shall not even for a moment repent our dedication to the great cause: yes, this is what we must all do, best beloved: this is the real glory of man: this is what it means to be good, great, happy, free and beautiful: this is the real triumph of man over nature and himself: this alone is life, joy, empire and victory!

As Peggy spoke the last strophe in the dazzling sunlight which flooded my dream, I woke with a start into my prison cell. Tears streamed down my face and the most extraordinary ecstasy filled my entire being.

*In the theatre,
The actors act the ritual of their parts,
Clowns, killers, lovers, captains,
And the end falling on the sword. . . .*
—Stephen Spender.

I WAS STILL IN THE EXALTED MOOD of my dream when I heard a loud knocking. Dawn flamed through the barred window. The door opened and Sergeant Muehlbach came in with two armed guards. All my senses awoke violently: my last hour on earth: this was the day of execution. I was to die with my friends Hans Bayer and Kurt Hertzfeld.

"Get up, professor," the sergeant said. "You have a date downstairs. Your pals are waiting for you."

Sergeant Muehlbach was enjoying the situation very much. A lovely age ours: the great pleasure is to see another man die by violence. A guard handed me some tepid coffee and a piece of dry bread. I could not touch it. I was half dead with fright, and soon even that emotion vanished and my heart became completely frozen. The prelude was worst of all.

Slowly I followed the guards into the hallway, down the stone stairways, into the courtyard. The dawn was at its peak and glorious was my last day on earth. What painter could touch the colors of the sky, what poet celebrate precisely the cool blue air this summer morning? How green the trees were, how sweet the song of the birds in the leaves! The prisoners of the Big Hall were lined up in two rows in the courtyard; a hundred faces were drawn gray, their heavy eyes fixed in front of them. About fifty paces ahead, like officers in front of their troops on parade, were Hans and Kurt. They stood close together at attention, looking neither to right nor left. Their eyes were fixed on the green scaffold which had been erected overnight and now stood in the center of the yard, surrounded by armed SS guards. The execution block on the broad platform had been scrubbed clean. Near it stood the headsman in stiff white shirt, silk hat, white gloves and striped gray trousers, like a gentleman on a morning visit to the Chancellery. His face wore a heavy black

mask, and his right hand leaned on a broadax with a polished wooden handle four feet long and a solid back of square glittering steel. Behind him were two aides, their faces masked. One of them stood motionless with his arms folded; the other was dripping water out of a small funnel on the gritty wheel of a grindstone.

Seated on the block itself was Inspector Keller. He wore a new uniform. Its fine black cloth lay in perfect folds around his gaunt body, and there was a large military decoration on his chest. Freshly cleaned, the inspector's boots gleamed in the early morning light. He sat on the block smoking a cigarette, and his black eyes glittered with gay malice as they surveyed the scene. From the prison buildings, hundreds of prisoners looked out their windows. I stood motionless in the doorway trying to believe all this was real.

"Keep marching, professor," Sergeant Muehlbach said.

I was prodded to Kurt's side; he stood between Hans and me. My guards moved up to join the armed escort around the scaffold. On the ground, below the light-green platform, stood three long baskets as large as coffins and a large bin full of sawdust. The scaffold, too, was covered with sawdust.

Kurt gave me a pale smile. Hans turned his head, faced me for a moment and greeted me with his gray eyes. Silence hung over the courtyard like a shroud.

Suddenly the air throbbed with the deep roll of drums and high trumpets cried into the dawn. From a door at the far end of the yard, opposite the wing containing my solitary cell, a bugle and drum corps came marching out, followed by SS guards in black uniforms with skull and bones on their helmets—the death's-head guards. The trumpet's peal rang out across the yard, loud and terrifying, full of doom. Involuntarily I thought of Count Egmont's execution nearly four centuries ago on a bright summer day in Brussels: nay, he replied, I will die right valiantly: thereupon the executioner carried out his appointed task with the sword.

With drums baying deeply and trumpets calling, the black-uniformed troops marched up to the space between the three of us awaiting execution and our fellow prisoners. The drums rolled relentlessly all the time, and I could hear my heart drumming with them in the roll of death.

On the broad wooden scaffold, Inspector Keller crushed his cigarette on the execution block and pitched it with thumb and middle finger neatly into the courtyard. He rose in a leisurely way and raised his right hand high, with the palm flat outward.

Drums and trumpets stopped abruptly. A profound hush fell over the courtyard. A prisoner coughed timidly, and choked the cough

in his throat. The sun began to show through the skies. Inspector Keller cleared his throat.

"Gentlemen!" he said in a loud voice that cut across the yard. "This moment requires explanation."

Nobody moved; the stillness became unbearable.

"History," Inspector Keller resumed, "is being made everywhere. It is made not only at cabinet meetings and on battlefields. It is also made on the execution block. Political necessity compels us to break up your secret underground organization. We are going to do this by executing your leaders this morning. But this is not enough. It is necessary for every one of you prisoners to realize that the ax which is about to cut off their heads hangs over yours by the thinnest of hairs."

The inspector paced up and down the broad wooden platform, stopped, faced us all again and continued:

"Most of you started out as idealists. You wanted to redeem man from oppression and ignorance. Two thousand years of failure in this respect has not taught you a thing. You repeated every mistake that has ever been made. You pursued the impossible. The execution about to take place here is symbolic of our age. Everywhere sensible men are cleaning out the dreamers and idealists, the dangerous visionaries who draw men away from their natural selves. Men are animals; they have animal instincts; they do not want salvation, liberty or democracy; it is the dreamers and idealists of the world who lead them astray with utterly impossible mirages. For centuries men have lived normal lives of conflict and power. Then came the damned Jews with their spiritual, invisible god; their gospel of justice, and finally Jesus. That is the curse of the world—the crazy idea that men are good, that they can be raised above the level of beasts, that they want impossible things like liberty, equality and fraternity. Away with it all! Rid the world of the great mirage! Only the dreamers and idealists want that, and in the end they always die. Look at Christ: he loved men and they crucified him. Look at Napoleon: he despised men and they crowned him."

The inspector took out his handkerchief and wiped his forehead with it. The headsman, stiff in his black mask, shifted his ax to his other hand and leaned on it calmly. Next to me Kurt raised his head and looked toward the inspector with a strange gleam in his eyes. Hans remained motionless. I was too paralyzed to feel anything, and did not dare to turn around and look at the guards and prisoners lined up behind us. The inspector's voice cut across the courtyard again:

"The prisoners to be executed this morning are three types the world will be better off without: the practical politician committed

to a mirage, the poet celebrating that mirage, and the historian fool enough to distort all history to show this mirage is inevitable. They will die—but before their execution, a sense of realities must be restored. A great piece of nonsense is going to be shattered. It is not the liberal poets, organizers and historians that count; society does not rest upon ideas of justice, humanity, democracy, progress and all that nonsense left over from Age of Enlightenment. No, the real basis of all society is the executioner!”

The last phrase was startling and familiar. Normally, I would have had no difficulty in placing it; now I only knew that I had encountered it before—where I could not say. I became aware that I was staring at the inspector and in a moment he was saying:

“Ah, I see Professor Schuman recognizes the idea. It has been uttered before. Everything has been uttered before. Yes, the real basis of all society is the executioner. . . . Step forward, you!”

The executioner slung his ax across his shoulder and came forward to the inspector’s side. This man, who had taken so many lives on the block, was about to take mine. A shudder of horror and repulsion surged through me. Inspector Keller placed his hand on the executioner’s shoulder, surveyed the prisoners calmly and said:

“Nature has decreed that might is right. By that right plants and animals perpetually destroy each other. Among men the same law prevails: the law of war. By that right, every society produces its leader. That leader is always, everywhere, first war lord, then autocrat. He possesses the divine and terrible prerogative of deciding who are guilty and of punishing them. No society could endure without this prerogative. But it would be useless unless there was a man whose profession it is to execute the punishments ordained by human justice. And think of it, gentlemen! Such a man can always be found! You may consider it strange, fantastic, inexplicable that any man should want to follow the profession of executioner—yet in every age, every climate, every land, every race, every system of society, the executioner is there, the man who for money is ready to take the lives of those whom the state declares guilty.”

I suddenly recalled these ideas came from de Maistre, that sinister apologist of the reaction which followed in Europe on the heels of the French Revolution. How did the inspector come across this? What had led this Nazi official to the one book which most eloquently uttered the real values of the reaction in our times?

The inspector walked around the executioner, placed his hand on his left shoulder and went on:

“What a paradox, gentlemen! The executioner is the most necessary man in society, yet he is the most misunderstood, the most maligned. We all admire the soldier. In wartime when he is perform

ing his duties the soldier is considered so noble that he ennoble even those actions which are generally considered the most degrading. As a member of a firing squad, the soldier may exercise the calling of executioner without suffering the slightest degradation—so long as he carries out the sentence of death upon members of his own profession, and uses no other instruments for that purpose but its weapons. In short, gentlemen, in wartime the most highly regarded, the most honorable profession is *the innocent shedding of innocent blood*. If this is the universal feeling about the soldier, why do we despise the executioner? Here is a man who instead of some profitable and honorable calling has chosen that of torturing and killing his fellow men. Isn't he really a being of some peculiar and higher kind? Outwardly he looks like one of us, yet he is an abnormal being, shunned and loathed by everyone. But why? How silly! Think of it, gentlemen: *all greatness, all power, all order depend upon the executioner*. He is the terror of human society and the tie that holds it together. Take away this incomprehensible force, get rid of the executioner, and that very moment order is superseded by chaos, leaders fall, states disappear. The law of nature is clear: without a leader, no sovereignty; without sovereignty, no unity; without unity, no authority; without authority, no faith; without faith, no society. But all these would collapse without the executioner. Let us pay homage to him, gentlemen! He is an august being, the cornerstone of society. Alas, since the time of Christ, the democratic idea has taken up its abode upon earth. It can be kept in check only by punishment. If the executioner disappeared, all order would disappear with him. Gentlemen, three cheers for the executioner!"

Behind me the guards cheered loudly: Heil! Heil! Heil! The prisoners, prodded by truncheons, rifles and whips, joined feebly against their will in this gruesome piece of theater which the inspector insisted upon carrying out, heaven knows why. Hans, Kurt and I did not cheer, but the roaring of the guards' voices obscenely filled the courtyard as the sun came out in full force upon this fantastic scene.

Yes, at first everything struck me as incredibly fantastic: Galgenhumor, Grand Guignol, sheer madness. Then I thought: why fantastic? Is this any more horrible, unreal or mad than what has been going on in Europe every day for a decade? A few years ago anyone who merely imagined what actually goes on in the world would have been locked up as lunatic; now it is all quite normal. You must be surprised at nothing: the inspector may go to incredible lengths and it will still be real. Never say of the enemy he won't dare; he dares anything at the very moment when we deceive ourselves into

believing he won't dare; and he will keep on winning until we no longer say he won't dare and begin to dare ourselves, to dare everything for his destruction, to dare and dare again for the good world. All this is real. How real and beautiful is the early morning sky; how real and brave the fellow prisoners around me; how real and strong the face of my friend Hans Bayer, born to lead men wherever fate might cast him; how real and lucid the eyes of my friend Kurt, born to love men and to ease their hearts with truths that hide in symbols. Truly, that scaffold is real and the ax and the dread end that awaits us and the obscene applause for the masked monster about to inflict it.

The cheering ceased. The executioner bowed and stepped back into his original place beside the block. Inspector Keller looked down at us from the scaffold smiling.

"Gentlemen," he said, "it is customary at most executions to grant those about to die one last wish. Usually it is something silly—a good cigar, a final message to friends or relatives. To hell with that sentimental nonsense. I am going to grant the condemned something better than a hearty breakfast. I am going to grant them what they like better than life itself, otherwise they would not be here awaiting the executioner's ax. What does a democrat, a libertarian, an intellectual, a radical love more than anything else in the world? *To speak his mind!*"

Kurt and Hans looked straight ahead without revealing their thoughts. What was the inspector driving at?

"Soon," the inspector went on, "the privilege of speaking one's mind will vanish utterly from the world together with the individual personality. There is no room for it in the new age of masses and leaders. But in this camp I have the power to ring the curtain down on free speech in my own way. Let the condemned speak their minds freely. Their last platform is the scaffold, and what can be more appropriate these days? Prisoners and guards will be their last audience. In me they will find an impartial chairman who will maintain order."

The guards laughed heartily at this gruesome joke. I felt angry and helpless.

"Hans Bayer!" the inspector called.

As Hans Bayer started toward the execution block, Kurt's face became white. From the scaffold the inspector said:

"One more thing, gentlemen. I am granting you the privilege of free speech as it is granted always, everywhere—with conditions. You will not be permitted to talk about immediate practical politics. You may not discuss recent treaties or impending wars."

It was the last day of August, 1939, but we had been cut off

from the world and the inspector's cryptic reference was lost upon us completely.

"Confine yourselves to general ideas," the inspector went on. "What you are about to say ought to be your last will and testament, so to speak. Within those limits you may say what you like."

I shall never forget the calm with which Hans Bayer ascended the scaffold. He ignored the inspector and the guards, and stood quietly facing the prisoners. The sun lit his head and for the first time since my arrival in the concentration camp I saw him as I had first seen him five years ago in Vienna—well-built, gray-eyed, simple and clean in every gesture, certain of himself, the world and the future. The brightest courage filled his powerful face; he seemed young again and, when he began to speak, indestructibly alive.

"Comrades and friends," he said, "this is a sanguinary farce, but you must disregard both the blood and the comedy. You have seen great things in your life and greater things await you yet. I am sorry I shall not be with you when they happen."

His words broke the tension which had bound us like chains. From open windows along the prison building, faces looked through the bars, attentive to this incredible moment. On the scaffold Hans Bayer resumed his last speech on earth:

"Everything we have predicted for a hundred years has come to pass. The old order has created machines it can no longer master; it has called into being classes and peoples it can no longer hold down. Oppressors have dominated the world but could not give it bread, peace, human dignity. Equipped with marvelous instruments for good, they have wrought incalculable evil. Man can make earth yield food abundantly for all, yet hunger runs wild and people live in hovels unfit for dogs. The greed of oppressors knows no bounds; the grasses are soaked with blood. The agony has been there for thousands of years; it persists because the privileged want it. When 170,000,000 people took a sixth of the globe into their own hands and tried to establish a good society, did the despots of the world let them be? No, they conspired, invaded, quarantined a whole people; for their gold and power, innocent millions died."

Hans looked down upon us from the scaffold. The inspector watched him carefully, but did not move.

"A great miracle appeared," said Hans. "A marvelous flame emerged from the jungles of history. Armed with the only kind of freedom possible in that place at that time, a people of darkness became a people of light, a primitive land leaped boldly into the next century. Whether you go to your death as I go now or survive to fight the next battle in the greatest of all wars of liberation, never forget that miracle. It has been established for all time that economic

slavery is stupid, criminal, needless; men can not only live without it—they can live infinitely better. Take courage, comrades and friends, take courage from the indestructible hope of the decent, hard-working millions! The earth is indeed trembling to its foundations; the people everywhere are determined that the machinery of production, the means of existence itself, shall not be the monopoly of privilege, but the common heritage of all."

Inspector Keller lit a cigarette nervously.

"We are in the hands of the foe," Hans went on. "The great conflict is bound to be full of twists and turns, full of terrible surprises, agonies and bloodshed, but in the long run the brown monsters will perish; the men of greed and gold everywhere who aid and abet them will perish. The peoples of the earth will yet be free! Yes, everywhere, on every continent, in every land, the slavery and misery of the past will be destroyed, the nations will take machines into their own hands and mold a future fit for civilized man. Courage: in the end the peoples of the earth will win; in the end they will make full use of their glorious opportunities. For this great goal it is a small sacrifice to give one life. If I had a dozen, I would not have spent them differently. How fortunate I am! I have lived for the movement which heralds the new age; I have worked and fought for it as best I could; I die for it with good conscience and absolute faith in the future."

The morning sunlight fell upon him in all its glory.

"Good-bye, comrades and friends," Hans said. "Thank you for everything. Good luck, good cheer, fight bravely!"

The inspector raised his hand and the executioner's aides stepped forward. Hans faced the prisoners again and raised his clenched fist in the old salute. Then quietly he walked toward the executioner, knelt in the sawdust and placed his head upon the block. It protruded over the polished wood; beneath it stood a basket with sawdust. The executioner's aide began to tie a handkerchief around his eyes, but Hans shook his head.

"No, no," he insisted. "I like to see where I am going."

"Leave it," said the inspector, and nodded to the executioner.

Behind me the drums of the death's-head guards began to roll. The executioner stepped forward, removed his white gloves, put them in his pocket and lifted the broad ax. He poised it briefly over the victim's neck, and at that moment Hans Bayer cried loudly:

"Long live the Cause!"

Drums throbbed with mounting passion. The ax came down and Hans Bayer's head rolled into the basket. Violently the torso trembled and the blood gushed along the scaffold. A terrible silence filled the courtyard. One of the executioner's aides began to wash the blood-

stained block; another dragged Hans Bayer's corpse along the scaffold and threw it into one of the coffin-baskets below. Then he placed the lifeless head between the thighs and covered the coffin with canvas, hiding forever what had once been Hans Bayer.

"All right," the inspector said. "Kurt Hertzfeld next."

Kurt looked at the blue morning sky a moment. Then he turned, embraced me, and said: "Good-bye, Paul." He walked quickly away toward the block.

Now he stood on the scaffold facing us in the clear light. His blue eyes were serene, his heavy golden hair glistened in the sun and the purity of his face was devoid of fear. Beside this young figure of innocence and courage, Inspector Keller looked more sinister than ever, and a new malevolence was visible in his black eyes.

"Go on," he ordered the poet. "Speak your piece."

Kurt smiled to the prisoners and said:

"Comrades, I am a lucky man. Death grants what life denied me. I leave this earth speaking to those who have been my nearest and dearest companions. We have just lost a wonderful comrade. His last thoughts were about our struggle for a free world. I share those thoughts. Yet there is something I ought to add perhaps in this farewell to you. Yes, the machine will mold a great future for mankind; the physical conquest of the world lies within your grasp; but man lives not by bread alone. All suffer because our hands are on the dynamo but our hearts are in the jungle. We have mastered the laws of energy, quantity and speed but not those of faith, hope and love. That is our next great task—the revolution of man's heart. Through sweat, blood and tears we have learned the ways of power. Let us be as diligent in learning the ways of justice, charity and love. Without these there can be no salvation. Unless we understand each other, we understand nothing; unless we love each other, we love nothing; and where there is no love there can be no freedom, security, or good life. Oh, it will come to that, I know! Everything is ready. Hatred has so darkened the world, we shall be driven to open the gates to love's vast, healing light. We shall have to care for each other if only to save ourselves."

Kurt's face was radiant and he looked at us with luminous compassion.

"Good-bye, comrades," he said quietly. "Good luck. Thank you. You have been very kind to me."

My head began to swim in circles; air waves danced before the scaffold. One of the executioner's aides strapped Kurt's hands behind his back and made him kneel at the block. Like Hans before him, the poet refused to be blindfolded. The inspector nodded, the exe-

cutioner stepped forward, deep drums rolled ominously; and at that moment Kurt cried in a loud voice:

"Long live the Cause!"

At the end, he had recovered what every poet knows instinctively: the need of sacrificing the part for the whole. He was dying as he would have died five years ago.

The broad ax glistened in the sunlight. Tears blinded my eyes and I saw no more. By the time the whirling mist before me cleared, Kurt's body and head lay hidden under the canvas in a coffin-basket and the inspector was calling my name.

I walked toward the scaffold as in a nightmare, thinking not of my impending death but of Kurt's excommunication. In his last hour on earth he had not been vindictive; he had seemed almost glad to die this way because it had given him a chance to be one with his old companions as the final act of his life. What did the prisoners think of that? I faced them now from the scaffold. Once I had read a novel in which somebody wonders what thoughts fill the head of a condemned man before the ax comes down upon it. Perhaps at this moment the prisoners were wondering about that very thing, and how could I give them the answer? It was about them I was thinking. They were silent, impassive, full of secret reflections I would never decipher. History has recorded everything except the real thoughts of the crowd.

"What are you waiting for?" Inspector Keller said sharply.

Had he begun to regret his sanguinary farce? Too late: he could not stop it. I was frightened less of the ax than of speaking my last thoughts from the scaffold.

"I'd rather not speak," I said, "What is there to say now?"

An indistinct murmur ran through the crowd. It seemed to please the inspector.

"There you are, professor," he smiled. "Your public calls you. Say anything you like."

I faced the crowd and all fear left me.

"Friends," I said, "we have all lived, suffered and thought much, yet many things remain unclear. Ours has been an age of great wisdom and great madness, great virtue and great crime; but one thing has made it unique in all history: the Nazis have brought evil into the world such as man has never seen before. Do not call them beasts; beasts kill only for hunger. Do not call them savages; even savages fear the gods. Do not call them madmen; madmen do not accomplish the ruin of millions. Above all, do not give the unique, incalculable evil they have wrought the glorious name of revolution which we associate with 1689, 1776, 1793, 1848 and 1917. And

do not sully the pages of history by comparing the diseased mediocrity who leads them with a genius like Napoleon. There are no comparisons: the brown horror stands alone among the centuries without precedent; it will perish alone without emulation."

I spoke in anger, and it was some time before I noticed that the inspector nervously slapped his white gloves against his thighs. My rage subsided. Another idea coursed through my head. Facing the crowd again I said:

"It's true: man lives not by bread alone. What has freed us from the jungle? Reason. What has raised us above the beasts of the fields, the birds of the air, the fish of the seas; beyond the hunter and cannibal of primeval times? Reason. Tragedy is supreme when we sell our birthright for a mess of pottage. Without reason man would perish; without truth reason would perish. The truth shall make you free. Reason armed with truth has enabled us to master the earth, the body, the machine; reason armed with truth will enable us to master our hearts, our relations with each other. One great poet has said that a harmful truth is better than a useful error. A harmful truth is harmful only for a time; then it leads to other truths which are more and more useful; but a useful error—or a useful lie—can be useful only for a moment, but leads to other errors and lies which become more and more harmful until man's reason becomes blunted and his gift for truth corrupt. Never forget this when you walk again under free skies. Remember the mind of man is even more beautiful than the earth on which he lives. Another great poet has said: the frame of things which surrounds us and which amidst all the revolutions in the hopes and fears of men remains unchanged, is beautiful and wonderful beyond any single thing; but even more beautiful and wonderful is the mind of man; at its best it can rise exalted in beauty, and then it has a quality and fabric which can truly be called divine." I hesitated a moment and added: "I guess that's all. Good-bye. Good luck to you and to the free world which awaits you. Freundschaft und Freiheit!"

The faces of the prisoners before me were battered by misfortune, but they looked beautiful, and beautiful was the world to which I was saying farewell. I had no regrets, and, since at this moment my faith in the mind of man was supreme, I was not afraid. Calmly I allowed the executioner's aide to strap my hands and blindfold my eyes; I had not the courage of Hans and Kurt; I wanted to leave the world as I had come into it—through total darkness. Blind, I felt the wood of the execution block under my throat; and my ears, rendered hypersensitive by impending death, heard the shuffling of boots through the sawdust around me, whispers rustling through the unseen crowd of prisoners, the summer wind caressing

the trees and somewhere a lone bird singing to the golden sunlight I would never see again. Oh, I wanted to live forever and ever, if only in a concentration camp with its soggy gruel and inhuman torture; to live for those brief moments when, in the yard, I could see the azure skies of another spring, the white snows of another winter; when the stars loomed large through the barred window of our great cell, recalling endless time and other worlds; to live for the memories of friends and lovers and parents in the irrevocable past which could never die in my heart as long as it beat; to live for the good companions invincible in their faith for the future; for the news which would reach us of the great struggle in the outside world, furiously, implacably surging toward a freedom which must come for all. And Eusebius! I had a pact with him, a task to do, a promise to fulfill. That is how the longing to live for my work came over me—in the shape of Eusebius demanding the historian rescue him from oblivion. Oh, to live, to labor, to be useful in the world!

"The ax is a little dull," I heard a deep harsh voice say.

"Why bother me?" the inspector's voice snapped. "You're the executioner. Sharpen it."

The rasping sound of ax on grindstone thundered through my brain. The handkerchief across my eyes weighed tons; the darkness was awe-inspiring. Always, everywhere one is born alone and dies alone. Maybe death would be swift, painless. at worst like the extraction of a tooth, then oblivion. A terrible fear seized me, fear of the greatest unknown: death; above all, fantastic horror of losing my head. They say the severed head lives on for a little while; sees, hears, thinks. What would be its last thoughts? Where would be this "I" which has lived and suffered and is now about to plunge into oblivion?

The grinding of the ax became unbearable; I wanted them to come at once. Now, now, now! Get it over with!

You are dead already. Why torture yourself with vain images? In a moment you will lie beside Hans and Kurt. A wave of rage flooded my being. Five thousand years of history and men like the inspector can execute men like us.

There are moments which are centuries and the longest of these comes before execution. Why had not the inspector provided a priest? Hans and Kurt would have refused his ministrations; not I. Kneeling at the block, I saw the altar in St. Stephen's, remembered, the afternoon, long ago, when, kneeling beside the jeweled image I whispered: Hail, Mary, full of grace. . . . I wanted deeply to have Uncle Peter beside me, and a strange desire came to pray for Hans, Kurt and myself. Truly, truly: brain, will and heart should have

worked together more harmoniously: we hope to obtain pardon of our sins: the help of Thy grace, the life everlasting: we have sinned exceedingly: in thought, word, deed: through our fault, through our most grievous fault: pardon, absolution, remission of our sins: we forgive all who have injured us, ask pardon of all whom we have injured: Amen.

I remembered my father's grave, and the men and women of Floridsdorf singing in the rain: *A new world is in birth!*

The grinding of the ax stopped, and with it my heart. I heard the executioner approaching. With a burst of death's own rhythm, the invisible drums began to roll. They beat in my ears, nerves and blood; the whole wide world became one frightful throb of drums rubbing and rolling through endless space and time, and I wanted with all my heart to die at once.

But after it is severed from your body, what will your solitary head think, on the edge of utter extinction? Give it something good to think, a last glorious image to carry away from earth, and I thought of Peggy, and close, close, inexpressibly real came her simple, beautiful face all suffused with that strange, vivid light which seemed to be looking for something in the world with an absolute certainty it was there, though not yet discovered; and vividly came her body leaping into the Semmering air, laughing brightly, as if she were certain she could touch the brilliant blue sky with her fingers; and here we are looking down at the mists in the valley below, sure, absolutely sure nothing in the world can possibly assail our happiness, and I am saying to her: darling, darling, darling, you are everything I have ever wanted, you have come to me in the flesh out of all the most wonderful dreams I have ever had, you are here to be loved and you are good, good beyond all thought because you allow me to love you; and death which parted us shall join us now, O most blessed and beloved wife. . . .

Folding my collar back, the executioner's hand was chill and murderous upon my neck. I felt sick at the pit of my stomach; my brain began to spin like a top and I fainted.

Eons later I came to. It was dark behind the kerchief which bound my eyes, but I felt no pain. Death by the ax did not hurt; and it was true: the severed head did live on for a few moments and it could think and mine was full of Peggy still. It even heard the inspector when he cried sharply:

"Halt!"

A mystery of the ages had been solved; the secret of the ego's essence trapped at last! The head was I and I was the head. It could hear boots approaching, and now the handkerchief was ripped

from my eyes and I could see I was kneeling at the block and my head was on my shoulders.

The shock of being alive was frightful. I felt ill and furious, as if the foulest fraud in the world had been played on me. I had accepted death; I had died. What am I doing under this blue summer sky, among all these guards and prisoners? Truly a man of my century, a dead man on furlough.

The executioner's aide unstrapped my hands. I rose from the block and looked around me, sick, sick, horribly sick in every fiber of my being. The prisoners, immobile in two ranks below the scaffold, looked white and terrified; even the guards appeared nervous; but Inspector Keller was smiling and the malice in his smile was infinite. He came up to me, gaunt in his black uniform, tense in every feature of his hard, dark face and said:

"How do you feel, professor?"

I tried to answer but my voice was dead within me.

"I've decided to spare your life," the inspector said, grinning. He turned to Sergeant Muehlbach: "Take the prisoners back to the Big Hall, sergeant."

Broken, I stood on the scaffold watching Muehlbach marching my fellow prisoners back to barracks. The trumpets and drums of the death's-head guards cut loudly through the bright summer morning. Boots tramping in military rhythm beat steadily along the earth and died down as the guards disappeared into the building, followed by the executioner and his aides. Two guards held my arms in this incredible phantasmagoria which reality alone could produce, and Inspector Keller still smiled at me with infinite malice.

"You will go back to solitary," he said. "I'll see you later, professor."

I don't remember getting back to my cell. When I became aware of anything, I was already lying on my cot, every nerve shrieking with terror and illness, horrified beyond endurance at the inexplicable, vicarious death I had just experienced. I lay there unable to sleep, caught in the vise of agonized stupor.

*While memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe.*

—Hamlet.

ARE YOU STILL THERE, DOCTOR? Do you hear me? Remembering horrors I had forgotten made me doubt my presence on this couch in your office but clarity returns and now I come to that part of my experience which directly preceded the vision about which I complained when I first came to you. I cannot recall everything, but I do remember that following the executions they transferred me to the prison hospital, a severe case of nervous shock and total amnesia. I argued with nurses and physicians, insisting I was dead, utterly incapable of bodily or mental sensation, unable to recall anything about the ghost whom they all addressed as Professor Schuman. Seven long weeks passed before memory and awareness began to return; then I was ordered back to my solitary cell.

There I spent eternal nights in sleep and endless days in a cataleptic trance. Now and again I was awakened by flashes of memory through which appeared overwhelming fragments I could no longer piece together: the violent death of my father in a civil war whose consequences nobody foresaw: my brief, incalculably happy marriage with Peggy: my lost book on human freedom: my search for the mysterious Eusebius among the records of the fourth century: my arrest and transportation to the concentration camp: then the life in the Big Hall: our underground organization and its hidden links with the outside world: the sinister figure of Inspector Keller: the attempt of Janos to escape into the wide world; his tragic death and Kurt's excommunication; and all these flashes from my real life appeared like the fragments of a dream returning with all the force of a living experience encountered on the absolutely certain plain of the actual world. And suddenly, in a rare moment of aching lucidity, I recognized that my soul had been stripped bare, my mind turned inside out; the prolonged catastrophe had broken down the barriers between imagination and fact, sleeping and waking, memory and apprehension; and destroyed the protecting frontiers between the secret chambers of the heart and the no less secret vistas

of external reality; and with a terror which I could not even fear I knew that my spirit had been violently torn in two.

But the mind was there somewhere in the uncharted spaces of my being, the remembered books and lectures, the solitary reflections of other years, floating in frightful independence through a sea of wild ideas which hurled their furious spume in uncontrolled interrogation. And through the darkness of the wholly unintelligible night I heard my angry mind whisper across the cell to my ears which no longer wanted to listen: and my lacerated heart gathered the pieces of puzzle into the familiar shapes of dry design.

Hitherto history has been an accident, my mind in exile insisted; men were too ignorant of their surroundings and themselves to understand and control their fate. Years of the modern promised something different, achieving partial mastery over nature, society and soul. It seemed as if man's destiny upon this earth need not be such a frightful series of accidents. We could foresee, plan, create good. Yet now all around us the powers of evil stalked the world; injustice struck; the innocent suffered. How many know that man lives in time? Who takes history seriously as the saga of brave men before Agamemnon? Will not experience teach us at last that none can bask in the sun with impunity while a crazy incendiary is prowling around us with flaming torch in murderous hand? Either we allow nature to take its course along the sanguinary banks of plunder, rapine and death or determine that human life is truly sacred, that human happiness and growth is the greatest of all living goals, that salvation from the jungle is what we most passionately desire, most desperately need. In that case, you start from the Christian idea—fecundating fusion of four millennia of wisdom bequeathed by the best of Babylonians, Egyptians, Greeks, Romans and Jews—and leap from there toward tomorrow's variants of democracy and socialism. Who told me we judge each other by Christian ethics all the time even when we most betray its teachings? Fascism is the repulsive monument to the Western world's disintegration of values: but who will say the Christian dream is dead? How long does it take for an idea to penetrate the lives of men to the very depths of their conduct? Eight hundred years after the Sermon on the Mount Charlemagne forced the gospel of love with fire and sword on peoples of Europe, and the teaching sanctified on the cross was carried at the point of the spear by a great Frankish emperor imposing the dream of universal peace by universal war. The Christian, like the Islamic idea, was implanted with the sword: it took a long time. Where are we today? Was it all a failure? After nineteen hundred years of the gospel of love we have the great catastrophe, the concentration camp, Inspector Keller. If St. Eusebius stepped out of

his oblivion and came to life today with the dew of Christianity's dawn fresh on his brow, what a bitter joke he would have at our expense and his own. And if the Christian centuries have left men still barbarous, if this colossal effort was so colossal a failure, what of the future?

I do not know when Inspector Keller entered my cell. He must have been standing some time against the stone wall smoking a cigarette in the fading light of dusk and watching me cautiously as the fantastic thoughts about history surged through a disordered brain I could not acknowledge as mine. Now I saw him smiling sardonically; I sat up on my cot and tried to focus attention upon him. I had no fear; he belonged to that realm of dream men call reality, while I was safe in the realm of reality they call dream.

"How do you feel, professor?" said the ghost of the actual called Inspector Keller.

"Feel?" I said.

"Can you hear me?"

"What are you saying?"

"Listen carefully, professor. Even if it makes no sense to you now, it will all come back to you later. Have you figured out yet why I first condemned you to death, then at the last moment snatched you from the headsman's ax?"

"Ax?" I said.

"I'll explain it to you, professor," he said. "Every man who wields power likes to play god. How could I do that better than by showing that I can not only take life but restore it? Besides, my seeming clemency dealt one more blow to the illusion that men are equal. In every society there are victors and victims, men who deal death and men who die. But nowadays who is impressed by stuff like this? Think of all who have been imprisoned, exiled and shot in our time; think of all who have suffered every torture conceivable and died every death devised by man. Why, it's become a commonplace! After the prisoners had been compelled to watch the execution of your two friends, what could I do to impress upon them the full extent of my power? They knew already I could deal death. Now they had to see it was also in my power to withhold it, to grant life, by far the most powerful form of power. Are you listening, professor?"

"To grant life," I said. "Yes, yes, I am listening."

"Then get this," said the inspector. "On the scaffold I thought at first the best way to destroy your Underground was to behead Bayer, Hertzfeld and yourself. But at the very last moment, when you were kneeling at the block, a better idea came to me. After all,

no matter whom I execute, the prisoners can always find a leader. Wherever there are two men, one leads. No, it would be much more effective to sow distrust among the prisoners, to poison their minds with suspicion, to make them doubt each other beyond repair. So I spared your life."

"Yes," I said, speaking as in a dream. "You spared my life."

"Do you understand what I am telling you?" Inspector Keller persisted. "I knew that by restoring you to life at the very moment when you already imagined yourself dead, I would injure your mind and finish you off. More than that: the prisoners would wonder what had happened, why you alone had been reprieved. Yes, I held the ace up my sleeve: suspicion, distrust, fear of betrayal."

"I suspect, you suspect, they suspect," I murmured to nobody in particular.

"Pay attention, professor," the inspector rapped out. "I'm telling you this for your own good. Had I executed you along with the others, the prisoners would have let out all their chagrin and fury against me. By releasing you, I created a lightning conductor for their rage. They have already forgotten I am the real villain of their tragedy; they have even forgotten that their two leaders paid with their heads for the secret organization. All they are thinking about is you, my dear professor. They understand my conduct, I am their enemy; but they wonder why you were suddenly released. That's what they are asking, and that's how their fury is deflected from me to you. Because you are innocent, you will pay for the guilt of all. You are my scapegoat. Don't be ashamed of that role, professor. You ought to know better than anybody else that there could be no high history at all without a scapegoat. You are essential to the drama in spite of yourself. Isn't that something?"

The inspector started toward the door.

"Good-bye, professor," he said. "At least you know death is not the worst that can come to a man."

He closed the door behind him. I lay back on the cot, half cataleptic, and tried to reconstruct the vague alarm I had just heard, when the door opened and the inspector returned.

"How stupid of me," he said with mock apology. "I knew I had a message for you. Do you remember your Eusebian manuscript? Well, I've just heard from the Berlin museum. You will be interested in what they have to say. Here it is."

The inspector threw a large, heavy envelope on the cot and silently glided out of the cell. For a long time I did not move; all my feelings were frozen; then mechanically I opened the envelope and took out the Eusebian manuscript. The parchment felt good; vague remembered hopes lifted their shadows and perished. Then I noticed the

letter which had dropped on the cot. It was signed by the director of the Berlin museum and said:

"My dear Inspector Keller: We are extremely sorry to inform you that the enclosed manuscript is obviously a clever forgery. The Umbrian dialect is correct, but there is no record whatever of the Eusebius to which it refers. Either Professor Schuman has been playing a puerile practical joke on you, or someone has played one on him. We are returning the manuscript with all good wishes. Heil Hitler!"

Paralysis of all emotion protected me against shock. I no longer cared about the Eusebian manuscript or anything else. I wanted neither to live nor to die; I wanted only to sleep.

When I awoke the cell was in total darkness. Strange music rang in my ears, and was it really the *Symphony Fantastique*? Then out of nowhere there came in a vast brilliant flood the light which heaven knows how illuminated the stone wall facing me. The light became more and more ineffably bright; the music filled the whole of night with magic incantation, and suddenly figures moved along the luminous wall as if a film had come to life; and all my senses leaped to attention. I knew at once that what I saw before me was real and not real as two men in Roman costume of the fourth century faded into the glorious spring landscape; and when the young man addressed as Eusebius replied in a rich masculine voice which I heard distinctly, "Yes, Polyclitus," I sat up and followed with all the alertness of my startled being the opening scene of the first vision which now at last leaps forth from the dark abyss of forgotten things into the liberation of light.

7

*This play does not represent the world's end,
But only the fall of a civilization. It is not
so late as you think: give nature time.*

—Robinson Jeffers.

I

(A village on the outskirts of fourth century Rome. It is dawn; sky and earth of early spring are suffused with light, and in the grasses of the field two men kneel in prayer. Bishop Polyclitus is short, stocky, gray-eyed; his companion is about twenty-seven, slim, pale, with thoughtful blue eyes and golden-red hair.)

POLYCLITUS (*concluding his prayer*): Thy glory, O Lord, by whose might all things are moved, pierces the universe: Amen. (*He rises*). Are you ready, Eusebius?

EUSEBIUS (*also rising*): Yes, Polyclitus—ready and frightened. Do you think Titus Quadratus will judge us severely? (*They begin to walk across the field toward the capital of the world. The bishop wears a fine cloak and stout leather sandals; Eusebius is barefoot and wears a simple tunic*).

POLYCLITUS: The new drive against us has been severe. We shall be asked to renounce the Faith. But you must not be afraid, my son. No matter what happens, remain firm.

EUSEBIUS: I dread the ordeal, father; but I'll try to be brave.

POLYCLITUS: Emulate the martyrs. Do you want an example to sustain you? The Asiarch celebrated a great pagan festival. Before the crowded arena members of the True Faith were thrown to wild beasts. What fortitude the faithful showed that day! One, in a transport of enthusiasm, drew the reluctant lion toward him. The crowd, inflamed with lust for blood, roared: away with the atheists!

EUSEBIUS: Whom did they mean?

POLYCLITUS: Our fellow believers.

EUSEBIUS: We are not atheists!

POLYCLITUS: From the Roman viewpoint we are.

EUSEBIUS: An atheist disbelieves in God.

POLYCLITUS: No, my son! an atheist disbelieves in *your* god. The empire persecutes us because we refuse to believe in its gods; some-

day we shall persecute those who disbelieve in our God. To resume: the tumult in the arena was enormous. The drunken crowd clamored for more victims, calling especially for Irenaeus, the most saintly man in the city. The police found him in an upper room of his cottage at his evening meal. Opposed on principle to needless martyrdom, the old man surrendered peacefully; he offered his captors food and drink; they allowed him to say his prayers. (*Eusebius listens politely; his mind is obviously on other things; the bishop goes on earnestly.*) Irenaeus prayed for the True Faith, the salvation of mankind and the ultimate triumph of our great cause. The police took him along in their chariot. On the way they met Quintus, the local police inspector, who begged Irenaeus to save himself from the stake. All you have to do, Quintus urged, is to say 'Caesar is Lord'; what harm is there in throwing a few grains of incense on the altar of the gods?

EUSEBIUS (*absent-mindedly*): Who said that?

POLYCLITUS: Quintus, the police official. But Irenaeus refused. This, he said, may appear a simple matter to you; for me it would be a terrible surrender to idolatry, to the world we repudiate—a shameful betrayal of the Faith: I won't do it. The police pushed the old man out of the chariot, bruising his leg; but Irenaeus limped on calmly till he arrived at the amphitheater. The crowd let out a great howl of joy at the sight of the new victim.

EUSEBIUS (*his sensitive face all attention now*): If I had been in his place I would have been scared.

POLYCLITUS: St. Irenaeus, too, was scared. But he heard a voice within him: be strong, Irenaeus! play the man! The proconsul pitied the old man's white hairs. See here, Irenaeus, the Asiarch said, why burn? Swear by the genius of Caesar. The old man remained silent, and the proconsul urged: just say 'away with the atheists!'

EUSEBIUS: The old man refused, of course.

POLYCLITUS: No; he did better than that. Raising his eyes heavenward, St. Irenaeus waved his hand toward the pagan mob in the amphitheater and cried: 'away with the atheists!' Then the proconsul urged the old man: swear by Caesar; revile the new faith and I will set you free. But St. Irenaeus replied: I have served the True Faith loyally for years; it has done me no wrong; how, then, can I speak evil of that which has saved me?

EUSEBIUS (*his face radiant*): Beautifully said!

POLYCLITUS: They burned St. Irenaeus at the stake anyway. He was serene to the end, a wonderful proof to us all that the trial, fiery-fierce but fleet, will from this little heap of ashes lend wings to the conflagration of the world which Christ awaits ere He makes all things new. Remember this, my son, when you face trial this afternoon.

EUSEBIUS: I shall remember it, beloved bishop; and I shall re-

member my father, too. Strange how the shadow of the oppressor's judgment revives forgotten memories. I was sixteen when a great persecution of the Christians threw my father into prison. They beheaded him. I wanted to share his fate; deliberately I sought persecution. But my blessed mother urged me: *live* for the faith! And so as a youth I became a Christian teacher, head of the local catechetical school for catechumens.

POLYCLITUS: We are all very proud of your brilliant success as a teacher and your ascetic life. You taste no wine, sleep on the bare ground, fast constantly, wear no shoes and have only one coat. You are indeed a splendid example to our youth. But look! There is a Christian village. The sun is high in the heavens. It's getting warm. Aren't you thirsty?

EUSEBIUS: I could do with water.

(They enter the village, dusty and tired from their long journey, and walk through its main street lined with two rows of cottages. In the distance a church steeple raises its gleaming cross to the sky. The bishop knocks at the door and a man opens.)

POLYCLITUS: Water, beloved brother in Christ! We perish of thirst.

MAN: Aren't you Polyclitus, bishop of the Orthodox faith?

POLYCLITUS (*proudly*): I am, and this is my friend, the teacher Eusebius.

MAN: I won't help you. You are worse than pagans. I am a Manichæan; you are the simple. We follow Christ; you distort Him.

POLYCLITUS: False servant of a false Persian prophet, masking the claws of Ormuzd and Ahriman with the sacred glory of Christ! Monstrous doctrine of a hostile people spawning nameless abominations! I would not drink water from your hand, doomed to wither in the flames of hell!

(The bishop and Eusebius knock at another door down the street. A woman appears.)

POLYCLITUS: Water, water, beloved sister in Orthodox Christ!

WOMAN (*fiercely*): What, you dare ask succor of a Novatian? You were too lenient with the lapsed; you forgave those who surrendered their faith under torture. Away, foul apostates! *(She slams the door in their faces, opens it again and begins shrieking with theological enthusiasm.)* Look, good neighbors and listen! Behold these Orthodox dogs polluting our village! *(All windows and doors along the street open; men and women poke out their heads and begin to curse—in the name of that Christ whom they all worship—the bishop and Eusebius who listen to the passionate turmoil in dignified silence.)*

DONATIST: Out, traitors! You are servants of Antichrist, spokesmen of the Enemy!

APOLLINARIAN: Foul man-worshipers! Worldly reactionaries!

MONTANIST: I spit upon you, Orthodox vipers, slaves of the carnal! You betray the sacred virtues of total asceticism.

(A Roman soldier comes on the run. The tumult subsides as bitter faces fill the open windows and doors with hatred for digressions from the gospel of universal love become sectarian monopoly.)

SOLDIER: What's all this?

POLYCLITUS: We were begging for water, and because we are Orthodox this pack of ravenous falsifiers seeks to devour us. Look at their foul faces revealing fouler hearts seared with every lie in the hierarchy of turpitudes: this black brood sunk in the eternally damned iniquities of heresy: these thrice-accursed Marcionites, Priscillianists, Valentinians, Carpocratians, Nicolatians, Marcosians, Tactianites, Valesians, Cainites, Circumcelliones, Audians, Sabellians, Arians, Sethinians, Theodotians, Merinthians, Apollinarians—all, all false and devastating prophets in the name of Christ, all arrogating the sacred omnipotent name of orthodoxy to their hell-inspired deceptions!

(The faces at the windows and doors begin to murmur anathemas but the soldier raises his hand and all is silence.)

SOLDIER: Quiet, all of you! You are all Christian dogs, every one of you. We are not concerned how you split theological hairs or each other's skulls. You are all followers of an illicit, desperate faith, all enemies of mankind. You seek to subvert the people, to destroy our civilization! You are men useless in business, conspirators, devotees of sanguinary Thyestean banquets! Get out, all of you, before I lock you up!

(Windows and doors close with a bang. The soldier frowns at the bishop and Eusebius, who walk to the end of the street quietly. Here an old man with a white beard offers them two bowls of fresh spring water.)

OLD MAN: Forgive me, friends: will you permit a Jew to slake your thirst?

(Bishop Polyclitus and Eusebius eagerly take the bowls and drink.)

EUSEBIUS *(to the old man)*: Thank you, kind friend, and God bless you.

2.

(A courtroom late in the afternoon. Judge Titus Quadratus sits upon the tribune, surrounded by guards and secretaries. He is a tall, powerful man who resembles late Roman portrait sculpture. His keen, intelligent face is forceful, rather tired; reflective eyes greet the ap-

proaching death of his world with the consolation that the deluge will come after him. It is his official duty to combat the new faith sweeping the empire. The courtroom is crowded with spectators. Eusebius sits alone near the tribune on a wooden bench for prisoners. Bishop Polyclitus faces the court with all the dignity and power inherent in his office and character. The examination has been going on for some time.)

JUDGE: Polyclitus, you are guilty of obstinate persistence in an illicit cult.

POLYCLITUS: We live a moral life, pay our taxes, do no wrong to our neighbors.

JUDGE: But you refuse to swear by Caesar's genius. Do you realize the consequences?

POLYCLITUS: I do not recognize the emperor-god of this world. I serve that God whom no man has seen nor with these eyes can see.

JUDGE: You have wasted hours refusing information about the underground life of your fellow atheists. Where are the Catacombs?

POLYCLITUS: I do not know: if I knew I would not tell you.

JUDGE (*studying the bishop*): Polyclitus, you puzzle me. You're my cousin, a Roman noble, member of a rich clan. How can a man like you throw away life and talent on a movement of poor, illiterate slaves, scum and dregs of the world?

POLYCLITUS: The Kingdom is at hand. He that is least in the Kingdom is greater than the greatest of you. The rich will have a hard time getting into the Kingdom, where equality will prevail. You speak of my family; the duty of preaching the Kingdom transcends all family obligations. Once the mission is begun, there is no retreat: no man, having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the Kingdom.

JUDGE (*smiling ironically*): You talk of a kingdom. The blood of our clan still runs in your veins. You like power, no matter how disguised. What did you do with your money?

POLYCLITUS: I gave it all to the church.

JUDGE: Before you became a Christian, you waited impatiently for your father to die so you could inherit his immense fortune. You used to drink wine like a fish. You copulated like a rabbit without distinction of race, age or sex. You kicked your slaves around. What's all this poverty, chastity, humility?

POLYCLITUS: I have long ago repented my sins, actual, mortal, and venial, and daily I struggle with all my might against pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy and sloth. There shall be more joy in heaven over one repentant sinner . . .

JUDGE: You say you gave all your money to the church? I thought you people believed in poverty.

POLYCLITUS (*explaining with harassed patience*): A bishop may not own property; the church may.

JUDGE: The bishop runs the church; therefore controls its property!

POLYCLITUS (*frankly angry, he looks around the crowded courtroom, then faces Titus on the tribune and says with violent energy*): Why do you persecute us? Why do you lie about us? Because you know you are wrong and we are right. That's why you declare us illegal and incite the illiterate mob to shout: *non licet esse vos*! The finest, noblest, most educated Romans now adhere to our faith but you insist we are a *foreign* superstition! You commit crimes and impute them to us; Nero burns the capital and calls us incendiaries. We are hounded as the "deadly superstition," the "curse that originated in Judea," enemies of the human race.

JUDGE: Certainly! Yours is a distorted, extravagant superstition, aggravated by contumacy and inflexible obstinacy; a malefic creed, impious and crude, whose adherents are men of lawless, reckless and desperate faction, men whose faith is empty and mad! *Homines deplorates illicitae ac desperatae factionis*!

POLYCLITUS: Our church had to pass through total obscurity. That age is done. We now stand in open day. Our bishop at Rome is an important personage not only within the church but in the city itself.

JUDGE: Therefore his election causes civil strife and bloodshed.

POLYCLITUS: Matrons and virgins of the Roman nobility are vestals in our monastic orders.

JUDGE: Consequently their sons and brothers step from the hierarchy of the empire directly into that of your faith. They change ideas and gods, and remain rulers of men.

POLYCLITUS: Paganism is struggling, languishing, writhing in death pangs.

JUDGE: Therefore Christianity grows haughty and wanton in its triumph. Your new faith has all the earmarks of the Roman Empire. It clings firmly to legal forms, asserts authority, demands complete submission. Sometimes it permits eccentric or fanatical ideas, but always within the framework of external unity. Your church is the Roman Empire all over again, extending itself over Europe by a universal code and provincial government. You have your hierarchy of ecclesiastical praetors or proconsuls, supported by a vast number of inferior officers each of whom is strictly subordinated to the one above him. This long ladder of rank descends to the lowest depths

of your new society. It is a great imperial machine with limited freedom of action in which final appeal is to a spiritual Caesar. A long way from Christ!

POLYCLITUS: We shall survive your empire.

JUDGE: You will survive, triumph, conquer men everywhere but you will not change the ways of men. You will not diminish the amount of unhappiness in the world, abolish poverty, eliminate injustice or establish freedom. You cannot increase love in the world by one jot or tittle. Your great triumph will be a great failure.

POLYCLITUS: Who says this? A proconsul of the mightiest, most oppressive monarchy in the world!

JUDGE: Four thousand years of history have taught us that all societies, however they begin, end in castes, privileges and hierarchies. The great eternal problem is the One and the Many.

POLYCLITUS: We are different; we have the true gospel.

JUDGE: Yes; but have you the desire or the power to save mankind or liberate anybody except the privileged beings strong or lucky enough to force their way into your hierarchy?

POLYCLITUS (*proudly*): I did not come here of my own free will. You arrested me. What do you want? What is your government's policy toward my faith and church?

JUDGE: We have never had a single policy. It changes with circumstances and Caesars. Pliny knew your faith was illegal, but wanted instructions on how to deal with it judicially. Ought we to make distinctions in punishing Christians? he asked the Emperor Trajan. Are they to be punished even when they forswear their faith? Are *former* Christians to be punished? Then the most subtle question of all: Are they to be punished merely for being Christians or for committing crimes as Christians? Caesar advised Bithynia's learned governor not to hunt out the Christians, but if they are brought before his tribunal by credible witnesses, they are to be punished.

POLYCLITUS: O sentence inherently confused! Caesar says we are not to be sought out as being innocent, yet are to be punished as being guilty! And see how oppressive your most enlightened rulers can be. In the liberal regime of Trajan and Pliny they crucified the aged Simeon and threw Ignatius to the wild beasts.

JUDGE: We do not pretend to be liberal in this reign. There are going to be persecutions again. But each case is wholly within my discretion. It all depends how you act. I'll give you one last chance, Polyclitus. Will you abjure the new faith? Will you swear by Caesar? Will you throw incense upon the altar of the gods? Or shall we make a spectacle of you in the arena?

(At this moment, Eusebius, sitting alone on the bench, turns toward his bishop with love, courage and faith in his radiant young face. Polyclitus is addressing the judge with righteous fury.)

POLYCLITUS: You are fond of spectacles, Titus. Expect then the greatest of all spectacles, the last and eternal judgment of the universe. How shall I admire, how laugh, how rejoice, how exult when I behold so many proud monarchs and fancied gods groaning in the lowest abyss of darkness; so many magistrates who persecuted the True Faith, liquifying in fiercer fires than they ever kindled against us; so many sage philosophers blushing in red-hot flames with their deluded scholars; so many celebrated poets trembling before the tribunal of the future; so many actors eloquent in the expression of their own sufferings; so many dancers—

JUDGE *(interrupting)*: It seems to me, Cousin Polyclitus, your system of love and harmony has a little touch of hatred and bitterness.

POLYCLITUS *(ignoring the interruption, rages on with his denunciation in the best agitational style: he looks around the courtroom, speaking to the secretaries and guards rather than to the judge)*: We do not in the least fear you Romans! In adopting the True Faith, we know we must be ready to sacrifice our lives. We rejoice more when we are condemned than when we are absolved. We grieve at your ignorance, pity your errors, shudder at your future destiny. We worship a living truth, you worship a dying lie. Yet it is each man's inalienable prerogative and right to worship whatever he deems sacred.

JUDGE: Freedom of worship used to be the rule under the Roman Republic, and even under the empire until you Christians became too numerous and influential. But when did your church favor freedom of worship?

POLYCLITUS: A man's religion can neither harm nor benefit his neighbor. It is contrary to religion to coerce religion. Faith ought to be embraced voluntarily, not under compulsion.

JUDGE: That is what you say when we persecute you. What do you say when *you* persecute heretics?

POLYCLITUS *(brusquely)*: You are sitting in judgment, cousin. Do your duty, but do not exceed it. Governors more resolute than you have acted in a humane, liberal spirit.

JUDGE: Why should I be humane and liberal toward a band of conspirators, agents of a foreign superstition, declared enemies of the state?

POLYCLITUS: Remember, Titus: your cruelty is our glory. Take care we do not come forward in a body to meet your assaults. How will you treat such numbers? Where will you get swords enough or

fire enough to meet millions? You cannot kill us all! Every martyr who dies in the jaw of the lion or at the stake is replaced by a hundred converts.

JUDGE: My dear bishop, I am duly impressed by your threats and am now ready to pass judgment. Before I do so, however, answer my original question: how can a rich profligate like you embrace the faith of the poor and oppressed?

POLYCLITUS: We receive all who wish to embrace the truth. We are not all angels; even after baptism there are bad Christians as well as good. I admit my youth was sinful; but one day a flame kindled my soul; a love of the prophets and those who were friends of Christ possessed my heart. This new philosophy alone is safe and profitable. Thus and for this reason I am a Christian. I wish that all men, making a resolution similar to my own, would adhere to the words of the Saviour. They possess a terrible power in themselves and are sufficient to inspire with awe those who turn aside from the path of rectitude, while the sweetest rest is afforded to those who make a diligent practice of them.

JUDGE: You accept the new faith, then, for the good it does you personally?

POLYCLITUS: Yes, but observe: a spiritual good.

JUDGE (*with official dignity*): Now to business. You are charged with belonging to an illegal movement, inimical to the Roman state and its beliefs; a movement whose members meet under veil of darkness, in lonely places or underground in caverns and catacombs, who use secret signs and watchwords. It is within my power to send you to the stake. (*Polyclitus turns pale, but stands firm.*) However, I shall be, as you put it, humane and liberal. Two years in prison for you.

(*The judge's face as he delivers the sentence is in close-up. It is that of an intellectual turned magistrate or a magistrate turned intellectual and somewhat resembles the supposed head of Titios Gamelos in the Louvre, revealing the split between knowledge and will, symptomatic of the disintegration of values. The judge already foresees Rome's end, hence his attitude toward the new faith, even when in a flash of insight he grants its eventual triumph. He is like an old man who, upon seeing a child, does not say to himself: this child will grow up and live a fine life as I once did; but rather: this child will one day become an old man, as I am now, and will die, as I am now dying. Polyclitus is taken by the guards. He kisses Eusebius, urges him to "play the man," is taken off to prison. Hitherto Eusebius has been sitting on the wooden bench awaiting his turn. He has been smiling all the time, a kindly smile full of secret assurance that all will be well, though when and how he himself does not know.*)

Eusebius is still smiling when the judge calls him to the tribune, and continues to smile through most of what follows.)

JUDGE: Are you ready to answer questions?

EUSEBIUS: What do you wish to ask?

JUDGE: Not what you expect, Eusebius. We know your record. You are a simple man, misled by a false creed. That is the mystery. I can understand my cousin Polyclitus; love of power can be satisfied in the church as in the empire; it requires no change of heart. But you wield no power; you are as subordinate in the church as in the empire: you are and will remain a nobody. Yet you believe in the new faith with all your heart and soul. What do you believe in? What is the lure of this new movement of the people?

EUSEBIUS: May I speak frankly?

JUDGE: Yes, I may find you guilty on the technical charge of belonging to an illicit organization, but nothing that you say now will be used against you. You may address me not as a judge but as a man. I want to play the spectator in a little comedy entitled *Mystic and Hierarch*. What is this new doctrine of yours on which you stake your life?

EUSEBIUS: I can hardly tell you in one afternoon. Our sacred teaching embraces the whole universe and all time, past, present and future; illuminates the mysteries of heaven, earth and hell; reveals the attributes of the Divine Essence; points to man's salvation with arrows of fire marking the depths of good and evil; warns the soul against temptation and sin; clears the way toward penance, remission, redemption; offers a vast wisdom about men in society; rends asunder the veils obscuring riddles of civilization; deciphers hate, war, authority, obedience, power, submission; and lights for all men everywhere the overwhelming universal hope whose enigma and certainty the mind is too feeble to grasp, but which the heart, purified by perfect love, can perceive at once in exalted liberation.

JUDGE: You speak of love like a Platonist.

EUSEBIUS: No, no; this is different. Have you ever considered the frightful power of hate which consumes men and destroys what is good in their life? Our Lord taught us to love one another; the apostles said none of us liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself: though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have no charity I am become as sounding brass or tinkling cymbal. (*The face of Eusebius is suffused with extraordinary purity.*) If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

JUDGE: Why do you harp on love?

EUSEBIUS: There are many virtues, and love is the greatest of these.

JUDGE: Love is a personal matter. I am interested in something else. Your bishop spoke of a kingdom.

EUSEBIUS: The doctrine of the Kingdom will transform the world. It will appear and reappear in a thousand forms; but the seed is here to stay.

JUDGE: What do you mean by "the kingdom"?

EUSEBIUS: It is a simple, sublime idea; a bold, uncompromising demand for a complete change and cleansing, without and within: an utter, thoroughgoing purification of man's entire life. There are no favorites in the Kingdom. There all men are brothers, sinners alike and beloved sons alike of the divine Father; and all races are equal. The Kingdom includes all followers of the True Faith, whether they come from the depths or the heights of society.

JUDGE: You wish to reduce everyone to the level of slaves.

EUSEBIUS: No. Our Teacher condemned privilege, inequality of economic status, private wealth, personal advantage. *All* men and all their possessions belong to the Kingdom. There must be no private riches, no selfish life. The righteous way is for all.

JUDGE: It is, then, a kingdom of the poor—into which the rich may not enter.

EUSEBIUS: Not so long as they trust in riches.

JUDGE: The teaching of your master is clear enough. We Romans understood its revolutionary nature better than his disciples; that is why we executed him. But a great idea is one thing; reality is another.

EUSEBIUS: The idea is simpler than you think, Titus. It is a truth to which all life, history, and experience attest. Men form a universal brotherhood. They spring from one common origin. At last, in the Kingdom, their individual lives, their nations, their races—everything they are and hope to be—merges into one common human destiny.

JUDGE: That is the teaching, to be sure. But after each Master come the disciples. A great idea spawns glosses, interpretations, offices, power, hierarchy, corruption.

EUSEBIUS: How can you, of all peoples on the face of the earth, charge us with corruption? Your Caesars have been guilty of monstrous crimes and vices. Now, in their final degenerate stage, they are weak and passionate yet endowed with supreme earthly power. There is nothing to restrain their lust, appetite, and greed. Self-declared gods, they can have no real faith of any kind. How can monsters like these believe in themselves, let alone man? Despotic and illiterate, they have no real knowledge upon which to build a great life for the world. Every decade is worse and worse. The basis of the empire's

life has become murder. No society can remain secure on such foundations. It is bound to rot and die. You are blind, Titus, blind to things without you and within. Above all, you are blind to the future. Your leading families enjoy the happiness of swine. They feast, wench, roar like madmen in the circus. Meantime, life for the people is laborious, dull, enslaved, full of famine, poverty, anxiety. Rome was once politically great; now see the apathy of leading families toward politics and war. Northern barbarians pour into the empire; no one resists. The people no longer think the empire worth fighting for. Can you blame them? Do you wonder that everywhere men ask: "What must we do for salvation?" Religions and sects multiply: gods, demigods, creeds, myths, rituals swarm through the world. But they cannot all be true. There can be only one truth, one idea to which the future belongs.

JUDGE: And that idea is yours?

EUSEBIUS: That one idea is the idea of our Faith.

JUDGE: The future belongs to the creed of slaves?

EUSEBIUS: Yes; the creed of slaves, the dream of the oppressed, the hope of the downtrodden. See what our faith has done already: it has converted bondsmen into men. They are today more courageous, more self-respecting, stronger than you, the alleged masters of the world. Therefore they can face, endure and survive your persecution. They shall indeed inherit the earth.

JUDGE: Who knows? Perhaps your cause will triumph in the end. Rome has dominated the earth for a thousand years. Perhaps your church will dominate it for the next thousand. But *what* will triumph, *what* will dominate? Not you or anyone like you; not your faith, or anything like it. You seek to save man by curbing his primitive, egotistical will; you want to substitute love for hate. But to carry your cause to victory, you must exercise will to the utmost; you must overcome your foes, therefore you must hate them. The gates marked love and harmony lead, in the end, to hatred and dominion.

EUSEBIUS: It is the pagan world that is full of hatred and dominion.

JUDGE: True, but look at your warring sects. What confusion, controversy, and mutual hatred! How remote it all is from the original idea! You are no longer teaching love or the brotherhood of man. Your main concern today is orthodoxy—the sole test of everything. One little point of doctrinal difference and a man who has loyally served the church may be reduced from affluence to poverty, from fame to oblivion, from friend to foe. And what spite, what rivalry, what pedantry in these turgid theological discussions of yours! Your Christian sects accuse each other of the worst crimes. We are rotten, too—but we do not pretend to save the world or liberate mankind;

we do not peddle illusion, self-deception, hypocrisy. What is the final result of your gospel of brotherhood, equality and love? Riot, excommunication, episcopal envy, exile!

EUSEBIUS: How can you speak of the final result? We have just started. The future lies before us. Our church is only three hundred years old. What do you expect from communicants whose roots are still in Roman civilization? Your slaves have been starved, beaten and kicked around for centuries. Do you expect them to become angels overnight because they have embraced the True Faith? Your nobles have killed in war, robbed in peace, brutalized the world for centuries. Do you expect them to become saints in a day because they have seen the true light? Give us time. The important thing is the original idea. Out of your slime and corruption men bring slime and corruption into our church. The hierarchy is not all good; but the hierarchy is not all.

JUDGE: I repeat: what has happened to your idea? First came the great vision of the New Jerusalem, a city of gold and precious stones, with a supernatural plenty of corn and wine for everybody. This world was to consist of happy and benevolent people. They would all enjoy the rich, wonderful kingdom freely. No jealous laws of exclusive property were to restrain them. Fine! The dream of the poor is that all shall be rich; the dream of the slave is that all shall be free. So the poor and the slaves follow your new gospel. Then what? The despised Christian sect becomes a powerful church, and power attracts irresistibly those who love power. The rich and the free of our empire see in your faith an opportunity not for liberating but for dominating mankind. Our Roman nobles enter your church; unlike you, poor Eusebius, they are not content merely to teach and comfort the poor and enslaved. No, they enter the episcopacy. Beginning with vows of poverty and humility (Oh, they must begin with that!) the new hierarchy rises within the church to riches, power, and freedom. It is all for *them*, the elite, the chosen, the aristocrat-shepherds who have completed the circle from power to power. It is not for the faithful sheep. But alas, a few sheep remember the original doctrine; they want to collect on the promissory note the church gives at baptism. They demand, timidly, respectfully but firmly, the creation of the New Jerusalem which has inspired them to sacrifice and martyrdom. A critical moment has arrived; but the hierarchy is not one bit daunted. The doctrine is changed. It is now officially proclaimed that the vision of Christ's reign upon earth was only an allegory; then it is declared to be a doubtful and useless opinion; then it is repudiated as an absurd invention; finally it is persecuted as a heresy!

EUSEBIUS (*smiling gently*): What you say is not wholly untrue, but—

JUDGE: That isn't all. Look at the government of your church. First you had prophets called to function without distinction of age, sex or natural abilities; men and women of the people. As often as they felt the divine impulse, they poured forth the effusions of the spirit in the assembly of the faithful. This democratic procedure became a nuisance to the hierarchy. The prophets were silenced, their powers were withdrawn, their office abolished. All the public functions of the faith were taken away from the assembly and turned over to the hierarchy.

EUSEBIUS (*Still smiling gently, with a strange self-assurance*): Surely you do not mean it is possible to have any kind of living organization without leadership.

JUDGE: Certainly—but this was not in the original kingdom of equals. And what a hierarchy: bishops, presbyters, doctors, teachers . . .

EUSEBIUS: They are necessary.

JUDGE: Granted. But consider the emphasis. First came the episcopal decree: *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*: outside the church there is no salvation. This automatically excludes not only pagans and Jews, but any Christian who interprets the teachings of Christ differently from your hierarchy. It is no longer a kingdom of all men, but only for orthodox members of your church. Next the hierarchy goes further. It says: *Nulla ecclesia sine episcopo*: there is no church without the episcopacy. Yes. The hierarchy now openly admits it has become everything. And they are right: power is everything. The laity has become separated from the clergy; the clergy is split up into layers on the basis of power; imperial Rome is shamed by the arrogance, dominion and wealth of your hierarchs. What Caesar, what emperor, what chieftain would dream of exacting that profound obedience and submission which your episcopal synods exact and receive?

EUSEBIUS: Obedience is a necessary virtue. Without it the True Faith could not survive for its great task of liberating all men. Give us time; the years will right everything.

JUDGE: Will time also settle the greatest mystery: community of goods? That was the great dream to be realized in the kingdom of equals. But your churches have become fabulously rich, and that wealth is in the hands of the bishops.

EUSEBIUS: Naturally the church acquires wealth. Otherwise she would be dependent upon the empire. Her freedom resides in her wealth. But that has nothing to do with the bishops. They are not permitted to own wealth. No man owns it. All the wealth belongs to the church.

JUDGE (*laughing heartily*): We went over that with your bishop

who does not own but does dispose of great wealth. And is it always virtuously spent?

EUSEBIUS: Why do you harp on trifles, Titus? Do you think we are ignorant of the corruption which creeps in here and there? Consider the vehement denunciations of St. Cyprian against those of our brethren who, in positions of power, have violated every precept of Christian perfection and moral virtue. A few unfaithful stewards have lavished the riches of the church on their own pleasure; others have perverted it for private gain, fraudulent purchase of property and rapacious usury. But we denounce these men. They are lost sheep, not the flock; the unfaithful, not the faithful; the exception, not the rule.

JUDGE: I am not talking about the exceptions, about those who overstep bounds which the hierarchy sets for itself. I am talking about the norm, the new principle. In the face of all these changes in the church, do you still believe in the original dream, the kingdom of equals?

EUSEBIUS: With all my heart and soul!

JUDGE: How can you?

EUSEBIUS: Because it is not church, theology, hierarchy or corruption that is important. These are mutable, ephemeral, perishable: they come and go. What is important is the new idea we have released into the world, the essence of our teaching. That can never die.

JUDGE: What is the essence of your teaching which cannot die?

EUSEBIUS: I have often tried to define that essence. I know it cannot be any complex theology or ritual; it must be a simple truth, for all great truths are simple, therefore difficult to understand.

JUDGE: Can you really reduce your faith to a single truth?

EUSEBIUS: Heaven forbid! That would be sacrilege and heresy. I would not touch a jot or tittle of the church's ritual, theology or law. I only wanted to find an essential idea for myself; I would not dare suggest it for others. They may have their own notions on the subject, and may heaven guide them accordingly.

JUDGE: What is your essence?

EUSEBIUS: It is this: *All men are equal, not in capacity but in value.*

JUDGE: What? Say that again.

EUSEBIUS: All men are equal, not in capacity but in value. (*He smiles.*) You seem puzzled, Titus.

JUDGE: Frankly, I expected something entirely different.

EUSEBIUS: That is the essential idea which appeals to me; and no matter how often Caesar triumphs or the church fails, as long as a single human being on this earth is oppressed, poor, persecuted or

frightened, so long shall this truth haunt the world. Yes, 'we also shall have our good men and bad, our heroes and cowards, our saints and criminals. It is quite possible that our new world, like your old one, may be marked by crimes so enormous, so epic that they are no longer crimes but historic tragedies. But all this will vanish in the face of the real, the essential idea, the truth that needs to be made alive for men to live, the saving belief that all men are equal, not in capacity but in value.

JUDGE (*his face still puzzled, but now softened by the simple faith of Eusebius*): Extraordinary. I would not have expected it from you. But tell me, poor Eusebius, do you *really* believe what you have just said?

EUSEBIUS: Yes.

JUDGE: I feel sorry for you.

EUSEBIUS: Why?

JUDGE: You are a strange creature, Eusebius. Forgive me, I do not mean it unkindly; you strike me as something of an idiot. You sincerely believe in the new gospel of human equality, freedom and salvation; you really love your fellow men; you genuinely want to see them happy.

EUSEBIUS: Thank you. You are very kind. But I am a member of a forbidden movement. I am ready to face the consequences. Punish me according to law.

JUDGE: Why should I punish you, poor Eusebius? You are punished already, far more dreadfully than I could punish you. Have you any idea where this love of your fellow men will lead you? Look at the real world in which you live; observe these two-legged animals whom you love and desire to save; see what they really want, what they are really like. My master, the Emperor Diocletian, is (between ourselves) a boor, a savage, an ignorant butcher. What do our fellow men do? They enthrone him, kiss his feet, worship him as god. Your master was gentle and loving; he wanted to save the world. What did our fellow men do? They crucified him. And if that happened to him whom you imagine to be the son of God, what do you think will happen to you? Do you believe you will fare any better? Go free! I send you back into the world with a heavy heart.

EUSEBIUS (*smiling as always*): Why is your heart heavy? What are you afraid of?

JUDGE: My heart is heavy because you are good, and I rather like you, and here I am sending you out to meet a truly terrible fate.

EUSEBIUS (*gravely, with simple dignity*): I shall find no fate the Romans mete out to me unendurable.

JUDGE: Did I say the Romans would mete out a terrible fate to you?

EUSEBIUS: If not the Romans, who then?

JUDGE: Go, go, now. And may all the gods and goddesses of all the creeds and sects in the world stop their quarrels long enough to unite in protecting you, poor Eusebius. You will need all the protection they can give you.

(Eusebius walks out of the tribunal. A man rises from the crowd of spectators and follows him. The man has a bulging forehead, narrow face, thin legs and long hands. Outside the courtyard he slaps Eusebius on the back heartily. The latter turns to see who has greeted him.)

EUSEBIUS: Good heavens, Basil! You startled me.

BASIL: With a slap on the back? You should fast less, brother! I heard you inside.

EUSEBIUS: Were you at the trial?

BASIL: Yes. Our bishop asked me to take notes. I'm not only deacon now, but his private secretary.

EUSEBIUS: Polyclitus was wonderful, wasn't he? How vile these Romans are to imprison him! But he will remain firm.

BASIL: You weren't bad at your own trial.

EUSEBIUS: You think so? I felt rather disappointed in my conduct.

BASIL: Nonsense. You made a spirited defense. I liked it.

EUSEBIUS: Thank you, my dear Basil. You make me happy.

BASIL: Let's go down to the church and notify the brethren of the bishop's imprisonment.

EUSEBIUS: By all means. We must hasten to help him in every way.

(They walk down the street arm in arm.)

8

*Fortune leaves always some door open
to come at a remedy.*

—Don Quixote.

THE LIGHT FADED from the wall like the end of a film. I was left in darkness, acutely aware of the prison. How could I make certain of external reality? I looked through the barred window of the cell, out into the autumn night at the wide courtyard from which the scaffold had vanished, down to the iron gate where the sentry paced up and down alert with shouldered automatic rifle.

Later I tried to recall what I had seen on the stone wall in a waking trance. For a moment I was afraid it had been a hallucination; then I realized it could not be so. All through the drama of Eusebius I had been aware it was unreal: a phantasmagoria projected by an aching brain: a vision. I had even followed it with some detachment; at certain points I had recognized speeches by Polyclitus and Eusebius as direct citations from the writings of the church fathers I had once studied at the university. Yet the situation was alarming enough. If I could succumb to visions of this kind, then truly had my spirit broken with the palpable world. By snatching me from the edge of the executioner's ax at the last moment, the inspector had accomplished his purpose: I was a very sick man: I could exist only passively, lost in the abyss of intemperate dreams.

Indeed, the next six months I spent in the complete isolation of my cell were a nightmare of bipolarity. The external routine was oppressively simple; the great events of the day were three meals of soggy gruel and going to the men's room; restless hours were spent in the unbroken shadows of meaningless reverie. During those six months the inspector never crossed my narrow horizon, but I was always aware of his presence in the prison, a master magician of evil calculating the agony of his victims and the destruction of their spirits. At the end of half a year I was more apathetic than ever; I did not care whether I lived or died, and had lost all sense of the difference between the two states. Only occasionally did my heart revive to long for the Big Hall and the prisoners with whom I had shared the most bitter of all exiles.

At last they returned me there and the very first day strangled my hope. Everything had changed. Many of the old prisoners were gone. Some had been released, others transferred to various parts of the prison. The enormous room was full of new people whom I had never met before. The handful of old prisoners who remained in the hall were tired and broken by their long ordeal. The new crowd was young and full of fight, dominating everything; they reminded me of Father and his friends long ago on the Daungasse, or of Hans and Kurt when they first came to Vienna vibrating with hope and vigor; yet there was something different about these people, too. The new world which surrounded me in the Big Hall was to the old as son to father; it made me feel far older than my actual years. Centuries of experience, never wholly digested, seemed to contract the sinews of my soul and to create distances between me and my new companions.

I tried hard to become part of their world. To the young, energetic leaders of the new life in this universe of four walls and an iron gate, I confided my intimate relations with Hans and Kurt, thinking the memory of these old fighters for the cause would be my link with the new. I was mistaken.

"Forget it," the young prisoners cautioned me.

It was sound advice. I soon discovered that the most fantastic myths had become for these people gospel truth. Hans was for them a legendary figure, as he deserved to be, but for reasons which had nothing to do with the reality I had known. Immerman was utterly forgotten; there were no legends about him because nobody knew his name. Kurt was remembered in the most curious way of all. Some believed he had been a spy who had betrayed the Underground; but even the more intelligent newcomers imagined him as something utterly different from all he had actually been; they thought of him not as a poet, but as a hardened politician who somehow had strayed from the fold and fallen into evil ways. Kurt's entire life of devotion to the cause; his aspiration, love and faith; his generous feeling about people and the world; his sensibility to whatever we mean by art; and his secret poetic dreams of justifying the ways of history to man—all this was thoroughly buried beneath the sands of distortion. Janos Vekely, on the other hand, was remembered as a victim transfigured by martyrdom and time into a nameless, indefinable glamour. As for myself, the newcomers were right: my association with Kurt was no asset. I was rigidly suspect, though not a single man in the room could say why. Perhaps it was because of the alleged speech I had made from the scaffold: by this time all the speeches, too, had come down to this prison posterity wholly transformed by the remorseless tongue of legend. And do you know,

doctor? I could not even be angry. There was nothing personal about it; dead and living alike were victims of the relentless requirements of politics; and every historian knows the vast gulf which separates an event from the myth which finally takes its place in the textbooks. I knew a hundred examples from the days of Akhenaton down; and now I was compelled to think about this a great deal. Isolated from the new society, I used to lie in my bunk for hours reflecting on experience as history. The myths of my companions were quite different from the reality I had seen with my eyes and heard with my ears; yet I could not tell them the truth; they would not listen. Clio is as helpless as Cassandra. The very fact that I had followed the drama for years and had myself stood on the scaffold that fantastic execution day disqualified me as a witness. Obviously the real experts on any event of this kind are those who were not there, who did not participate in it, who received everything by hearsay.

The result was exactly what you would expect, doctor. Rejected by the present, I clung tenaciously to the past. In the normal course of events, the whole story of Janos, Hans, Kurt and Immerman would have been relegated to those submerged regions of the mind where the mortified past slumbers accepted and undisturbed. My new companions would not have it so. By suspecting and isolating me unjustly, they chained my memory to the dead; I was continually haunted by a tragedy I was anxious to forget and transcend. Kurt especially filled the waking and sleeping hours of my heart, and I thought with needless bitterness of the hatred which had repaid his love; and that unwelcome ache made me perversely embrace the loneliness to which I had been senselessly condemned by the very people whose life I longed to share.

All this was lost on my new companions. Their indifference was extremely unpleasant, yet even here I could not blame them. The shadow of an enormous event made its way through the prison walls. It turned out, to my great delight, that the Underground still functioned, and it brought us tremendous news which soon became no secret to anybody. Even the guards talked about it freely. Here, as in the world outside, there was not a single creature who did not know the catastrophes and miracles which had shaken the earth to its foundations; and that is how I learned that, while I had been lost on the rim of madness and death in mists of dream and apparition, mankind had entered upon the greatest war in history.

I spent another year and a half in that concentration camp whose life was sometimes horrible beyond endurance, sometimes grim with demoralizing habit. It was a year and a half endlessly long with routine and torture: but I found myself able to sustain everything because of the new thing which had come to the outside world—the world that could never die in my heart; of which I was a citizen by

birth and choice; whose struggles, suffering and fate were identical with all that life meant to me. The great showdown between good and evil had come at last! And though the news which reached us in the Big Hall was dark; though the vilest of all powers in the annals of man was sweeping everything before it, I was not afraid for the future. From the very first I was certain as I had never been certain of anything in my whole existence that in the end good would triumph over evil, that mankind, joining forces throughout the globe, would crush the monster gnawing at its vitals.

How would you explain this certainty, doctor? Would you say it was mere wish masquerading as mystic intuition? No, no; it wasn't like that at all. True, I had nothing to go on rationally; for eons I had been cut off from newspapers, books and informed conversation; I had nothing to guide me but the disjointed fragments of political and military gossip which filtered through the prison, and that historical memory which of all the atoms of my nature continued most alive even in the blackest moments. Yet my certainty was absolute. Of course, the wish was there; but it had something solid to rest on: the heroic resistance of the British people. From the day I met Peggy I had always had a soft spot for the English: let no one say that a personal love so intense does not affect historical perception; and now, in this hour of universal agony, I wished with all my soul that Peggy were alive to see the moral grandeur of her people lift high its indestructible wall of steel against the barbarous might of the aggressor. But something else sustained me, too; something fundamental for all: the English spirit shining like a marvelous light of courage and hope through all disaster. I have never told this to anybody but you, doctor; it is not the kind of thing a man admits. Alas! we are less ashamed of our vices than of those magic moments of faith in which we foresense the good. But this is the fact: I endured with reflected fortitude another eighteen months of imprisonment saying to myself day and night: the fight will not be easy: never can the will or righteous arm of this great people relax until the liberating hour of final victory: but the English will not be conquered: they will hold the fort of us all: they will gain priceless time for free peoples everywhere to prepare the imperative manhood and armament of inexorable combat for destiny: the prodigious moment is soon at hand when in agony, death and bravery hitherto unknown to time, humanity will terminate one of the darkest of its ages, dispel from aching earth a long treacherous night, and clear oppressive skies for the dawn of tomorrow. And I was obsessed with a desire to participate in the sacred conflict, no matter how indirectly, how humbly, and cursed the fate which kept me a helpless prisoner of the Nazis.

Then, toward the end of June, 1941, strange things happened

with astonishing speed. We were taking exercise in the yard. It was a beautiful summer morning and Sergeant Muehlbach was in an exceptionally good mood. Pleased with recent Nazi victories, he celebrated the expansion of the New Order by making us jump, crawl, and roll on the ground relentlessly. My bones cried with pain and I was ready to drop despite the armed guards around us only too eager to beat up an exhausted prisoner. And at this moment I was struck by a queer feeling: my companions seemed to be enjoying life hugely. The more Sergeant Muehlbach made them run, leap and sweat, the merrier they became. Soon their mysterious elation penetrated even the sergeant's thick skull; he caught the laughter rippling through the ranks as we bent our knees for the *n*th time.

"Halt!" Sergeant Muehlbach cried.

We stood still, but the eyes of my fellow prisoners continued to shine with happiness and their lips parted in that secret smile which puzzled me and infuriated the sergeant.

"What's going on here?" Muehlbach snapped. "What's the joke?"

The prisoners replied with a roar of laughter which filled the early summer air with secret joy.

"All right!" the sergeant said grimly. "I'll give you something to laugh about. Back to barracks!"

We were marched to the Big Hall. All that morning, cutting leather around the wooden tables, the prisoners talked about what the sergeant might inflict upon them in the torture chamber, yet nobody seemed afraid and the mysterious laughter continued. Hours passed and nothing happened. Then, right after lunch, came the big surprise. Sergeant Muehlbach entered with a guard and called out:

"Professor Schuman!"

I stood at attention.

"Solitary for you, Schuman!" the sergeant said. "Follow this corporal."

On my way to solitary my brain spun with confused wonder. I had been wholly out of the mysterious gaiety of the Big Hall, yet I was the only one to be punished. The guard brought me to my old cell and, as I stretched out on the cot, he started for the iron door. It opened swiftly and a voice said:

"Have you got my man?"

"Yes, sir," said the guard.

I sat up on the cot with a violent start. There, facing me in the black uniform of a high SS officer, stood Egon Fuchs—old *Q 16-739* himself. Spots danced before my eyes; I felt crushed, helpless.

"Come, professor!" Fuchs said sharply. "Don't you know enough to stand at attention before your superiors?"

He looked very powerful in his shining boots and the service pistol at his belt smelled with warnings of violence. He wore an impressive military cap under which his cornflower-blue eyes glittered with hard impersonality. I stood up at attention, and with one swift wallop to the jaw, Egon Fuchs knocked me back on the cot. The guard grinned with pleasure as my lips began to bleed.

"That's only the first installment," said Fuchs. "Are you ready to answer questions?"

"It depends," I said.

Egon Fuchs shot out his right boot. It caught me in the pit of my stomach and I doubled up in pain with the guard's laughter ringing in my dizzy ears. I sat up and faced the mysterious tormentor whom I had so long considered a mysterious friend. Not a sign of feeling appeared on the features of Egon Fuchs; they were merciless.

"You'll answer anything I ask you," he said, "or I'll know the reason why." He turned to the guard: "All right, corporal. You may go. I'll take care of this bastard."

"Yes, sir," said the guard respectfully.

He closed the door behind him. My diaphragm heaved with agony. Egon Fuchs went to the peephole and looked out. A terrible silence filled the world. Fuchs turned to me quickly and now his face was smiling its warmest greeting.

"Hello, Paul," he said. "Forgive the painful comedy." A fine light filled his strong face. "At last we meet when it's not raining. It's a beautiful day for the job on my hands. This is part of it. I can't explain now. Trust me, I beg you."

I was deeply relieved.

"I do trust you," I said.

We shook hands; suddenly my whole being was filled with courage and expectation.

"Sleep as much as you can," Fuchs said. "You'll need all your strength. I'll be back at midnight. Till then, good luck: Freundschaft und Freiheit!"

He closed the door behind him and I lay back on the cot. The hours passed swiftly. I fell into dreamless sleep again and again, and woke to wonder what awaited me. Night came, and I could not close my eyes. I lay in a black sea of invisible time flowing along dark silence. Then the door opened and closed, and a flashlight diffused its beams through the cell. Egon Fuchs smiled to me as I sat up. He threw a heavy package into my lap and said:

"While you're dressing, I'll tell you about it. Make it snappy. Every minute counts."

I rose and undid the package swiftly. It contained the uniform of

an SS officer, a cap, boots, a service belt and revolver, and a pair of smoked glasses. This was no time to be surprised; I obeyed Egon Fuchs and began to enter my disguise at once. Fuchs sat down on the cot, smoked a cigarette and explained:

"Listen carefully, Paul, and ask no needless questions. We have decided to prove the Nazis are not invincible. We're going to attack them in this very stronghold. This time everything has been arranged perfectly. The Underground here has been oiled; it will function like a master machine; all prisoners are armed; several reliable guards have been bribed. At a given signal, the revolt will begin. There will be a pitched battle; when it's over not a stick or stone of this prison will remain."

My heart beat violently as I buttoned my tunic.

"Where do I come in?" I said.

"You are going out with me. A high-powered car is waiting for us in the field beyond the prison. I'll drive you across the Swiss border an hour away."

"Why make an exception of me? I want to stay here and fight."

"So do I," said Fuchs. "But if this thing is to succeed, everyone must take his assigned post. Your job and mine is to get out to Switzerland."

"Discipline," I said. "But now that I'm ready to play, won't you tell me what this is about?"

"All right," said Fuchs. "The revolt is Hans Bayer's idea. He started working on it just before the execution and left us a good plan. I took care of the details, first from the outside, now here. Hans wanted this to happen at a certain moment. That moment has come."

"Whose idea was it to get me out to Switzerland?"

"Also Hans Bayer's. This is going to be a great symbolic action and a terrible fight. Many prisoners will be killed; I hope most of them will escape. As for you, you've simply *got* to get out."

"Why?"

"You must tell the world about this hellhole. A thousand witnesses have told the story of other prisons; this one is yours. We know all about you; we like, respect and trust you."

"Was that also Hans Bayer's idea?" I asked.

"Yes. Frankly you were second choice."

"Who was first?"

"Kurt."

I buckled my service belt and put on my smoked glasses. The world was a huge shadow but the reality of things pierced my throbbing brain.

"Hans Bayer originally intended Kurt to get out and write the story?" I said.

"Yes."

I saw fantastic scenes later that night, yet the scene which stands out most clearly in my mind is this moment with Egon Fuchs in the solitary cell. We were standing at the iron door now and I said:

"Hans planned that before their quarrel, of course."

"Yes, and he never rescinded the order."

"You mean . . . ?"

"Your guess is as good as mine," said Fuchs. "Mine is that, if not for the executions, Kurt would now be standing in your boots." He glanced at his watch, turned off the flash and we stood at the door in total darkness. "On your toes, Paul. Everything will happen in split seconds. Follow me."

He took me through dark silent corridors, past unsuspecting guards, up and down unfamiliar stairways, and finally we came to a part of the prison I had never seen. He stopped before a heavy oak door and listened.

"Take off your glasses," he whispered. "When we get inside, don't say a word no matter what happens. Can you use a gun?"

"Yes, I was in the first war."

"Get it ready."

I opened the safety catch. Fuchs took a large key out of his pocket and opened the door. I followed him into the most extraordinary room I had ever seen, and stood back in amazement that it should exist in this prison. Despite the late hour, the lights were on; they illuminated the boudoir of a courtesan. Delicately tinted blue curtains concealed wide casements; the dresser exhaled the mingled odor of a dozen perfumes; the bed was wide and luxurious; the coverlet of blue silk. Near the bed stood a blue night table with flowers, a radio and a white telephone. This strange room seemed deserted but soon I heard water running in the bathroom. I stood tense behind Egon Fuchs, my hand firm on the butt of my gun. The water stopped running; someone coughed; the door opened and Inspector Keller came in wearing a blue satin bathrobe and elegant leather bedroom slippers. He saw Fuchs and his face broke into a pleasant grin.

"Ah, Ulrich," he said, "glad to see you. Sit down."

I was not surprised at hearing Fuchs called Ulrich; in the Underground one wears all sorts of names and faces. I *was* surprised to see the inspector. He was even more surprised to see me. Glancing nervously from Egon Fuchs to my pointed pistol, the inspector stammered:

"Gentlemen, what's this?"

"*You* sit down, inspector," Fuchs said genially. He took his

revolver out of its holster, spun it by the trigger on the index finger of his right hand, and looked around the room. "A bordello, I swear. Under all your Gothic masquerade, inspector, you're nothing but a bunch of stinking sybarites. Well, there's no time to reform you now. . . . Sit down on that whory bed of yours."

Reluctantly the inspector obeyed. Livid streaks broke out on his long, dark face.

"For God's sake, Ulrich," he said. "Is this a joke? And what the hell are *you* doing here, professor?"

"We're giving you a taste of torture by doubt," said Fuchs, smiling. He glanced at his wrist watch. "There's little time for it, though."

"You'll pay for this, Ulrich," said the inspector. "This is rebellion, or you're an Underground spy. In either case you'll be shot."

"I'll live to a ripe old age," said Fuchs. "How long you're going to live, Keller, depends on how well you obey." He stepped up to the bed and pressed his revolver to the inspector's chest. "I'll give you exactly five seconds to get on that phone. Call your office. Tell them to blow the siren for all SS officers and guards without exception to meet in the courtyard."

"I refuse!" said the inspector.

"Okay," said Fuchs, looking at his wrist watch. "One . . . two . . . three . . . You know, inspector, at this distance, I can hardly miss a target like you."

The inspector picked up the phone and quietly transmitted Egon Fuchs's order. He hung up the receiver and said:

"What now?"

"Now" said Fuchs, "we wait."

Soon the prison siren pierced the night with three long blasts. Through the door came the noise of boots on the run; voices shouted orders; a great tumult rose around us.

"Good night, inspector," said Fuchs. "Sorry to go; we have a lot to do."

We started to back out toward the door, when the inspector, with a lightning sweep of his gaunt body, opened the drawer of his night table, whipped out a revolver and fired point-blank in our direction. I heard the bullet whine and sink into the oak behind me. Fuchs and I fired several times simultaneously. I don't know whose bullet killed the inspector.

We were running through corridors crowded with SS officers and men, rifles and pistols in their hands, making their way in double time to the courtyard. The siren blew again and its weird hooting ruptured the night with alarm. I had put on my glasses and everything moved swiftly like a huge shadow of mystery and death.

Egon Fuchs did not lose me in that scurrying mob; ever-close behind me he whispered:

"Don't stop . . . keep going . . ."

At the end of one hallway, there was a broad winding staircase down which the SS plunged with a thunder of boots. It was here, in that furious scrimmage, that Egon Fuchs tore me out of the crowd and hurried me down into a cellar. He opened the door into the clean air of night. A sentry, just starting for the courtyard, saluted hastily and ran toward the rising waves of tumult.

Already the firing had begun. Behind us, rifles, machine guns revolvers and hand grenades roared in a bedlam of combat, confusion and death. The battle Hans Bayer had prepared was raging full blast, but we could not stop. I followed Egon Fuchs across the field, through the broken barbed wire, to the open touring car awaiting us.

Fuchs took the wheel and the car plunged into the night. The sound of the motor was sweet; I had not heard anything like it for three years; and now at last with tears of joy I looked up into the first stars of freedom.

And at that moment there rose behind us a terrific explosion, then another, and a third. Vast flames leaped upward in the night, the prison was wholly lost in the raging fire bellowing out of its depths, and the sky for miles around was red with conflagration. Fuchs glanced to the rear briefly, then smiling turned to the wheel again.

"Well," he said quietly, "it all went off according to schedule."

BOOK SIX

*Yesterday is but a dream,
And Tomorrow is only a vision:
But Today well-lived makes every
Yesterday a dream of happiness,
Every Tomorrow a vision of hope!
—From the Sanskrit.*

1

*World without form: Chaos beaten and beaten,
raging and suffering and hoping to take shape.
—Muriel Rukeyser.*

QUEER, DOCTOR: first I found it hard to describe the chains of incarceration; now I find it even harder to describe the first sensations of unexpected freedom.

I had been living for weeks in the Swiss village where Egon Fuchs had left me with a passport and money. He had promised to come back and arrange my passage to London but had vanished mysteriously into a continent raging with battle. I did not know where to reach him or how, or whether to wait for him. Then came his wire from the Balkans: DETAINED HERE BY SERIOUS BUSINESS STOP PLEASE TRY TO HANDLE EXPORT YOURSELF STOP GOOD LUCK.

A letter to Hague in New York remained unanswered. Except for Uncle Peter and Professor Gross, Vienna was for me completely dead in all but memory. I wrote both old men and was pained but not surprised at the silence which came through the heavy barriers of censorship and war.

For the moment neither this nor anything else concerned me much: I was too elated with my resurrection from the dead. My little hotel faced majestic mountains, green with summer below, white with perpetual winter at the summit, capped by the intoxicating blue of an August sky. I woke every morning to look at all this and felt reborn.

How simple the world is and how beautiful when we are free! I refused to read newspapers and books or listen at the radio: let history roar on toward uncharted goals: I would not hear: let me rediscover that life which is older than the annals of nations and survives any given moment of high conflict: before I become a citizen again, let me relearn from the beginning what it means to be a man.

To be sure, there was an ominous aspect to this struggle toward another life hard to combat. Alone in my room at night, especially when the lights were out and the hour late, I imagined I was still in my solitary cell at the concentration camp: the weeks of peace

and freedom vanished utterly; I lay awake in darkness sensing the merciless constraint of prison life. If I heard steps in the corridor, I started from sleep thinking Sergeant Muehlbach or Inspector Keller was coming to fetch me for a beating or a session of torture by doubt. My limbs shook alternately with fever and cold sweat; my heart beat violently; and all night I tossed about waiting for the guards to blow reveille.

But heaven be praised! Dawn came over the silent mountains outside my window; all was well; in the light of day I knew for certain I was really free at last and could pass these hours in a felicitous present wholly divorced from past and future.

The little Swiss village became my entire world; the rediscovery of my senses, starved for three years, my sole destination. It was sheer glory to wake in the morning and find yourself on a soft pillow, along white sheets, feeling the summer breeze coming fresh and fragrant through the window. Imagine: you can open that door whenever you want to and walk out into the world a free man! You can get up at leisure: there are no guards, no trumpets, no military exercise. You can lie here in this pleasant room, watch the verdant foliage outside and sense, for the first time in ages, the flesh and bone of your own body which has begun to forget the sting of the tormentor's whip and now grows warm with relaxation.

Everything was simple and beautiful. How could these Swiss villagers, always free, have any idea what a good breakfast was like? The splendors of Herodotus, Milton and Goethe could also wait: let me first become accustomed to the joys of good bread, cheese, milk, eggs, lamb and the civilized magic of a cup of coffee skilfully brewed in the early hours of morning followed by a pipe of fragrant tobacco. Then out into the street! There *was* a street, and the people on it were free, able to come and go as they pleased, sitting down at café tables to read whatever they liked. Incredible! I refused to believe it and enjoyed every moment of it, a man profligate with unaccustomed life. But do you know what was most remarkable, doctor? For three years I had not seen the face or heard the voice of a child; and now, O blessed hour of release! the village was full of children and I watched them by the hour and listened to their laughter fill the air with happiness and the unknown future with assurance.

One morning I picked up a newspaper and learned that Russell Hague was in London. I wired him at once, and did not care how long he took to answer. By this time I had found Anon. That was a queer, happy business, too, for a while. She was a waitress in our

hotel. She brought me breakfast in bed, a brief luxurious revenge on the concentration camp. When I had lunch in the dining room downstairs, Anon served me. I knew nothing about her; she figured in my imagination as Anonymous. Later I called her that to her face at least as often as I called her Lisl; but I never dared confide my discovery at this late date: that in every man's life there comes at some critical moment at least one anonymous woman who brings him the joys of a surface love which arrives and fades like a dream and for that very reason is remembered forever with gratitude.

Anon first appeared as a lovely pair of legs flitting among the tables. A week later I noticed her round bosom and soft, rotating rump. By this time I was ready to make the acquaintance of her face. It was a pleasant face and quite young: about twenty-three. The brown eyes twinkled gaily all the time; the hair was dark, thick, braided peasant-fashion on the back of the head; the throat was long, white, sturdy; the lips full and sensual. They tasted very good the first night I kissed them in the darkness of my room, and each time afterward they tasted better. Try to imagine the enormous happiness which overwhelmed a body accustomed to whips and truncheons when it felt two tender arms embrace it and what a miracle it seemed to entwine your legs in those of a passionate girl intent upon pleasure which asks no questions.

I did not tell her anything about myself; it was dangerous to reveal I had escaped from a concentration camp and foolish to say I had once been a professor of history. She knew me only as a tourist recovering from a long illness, and wasn't that true in a way precisely because it was false in a way?

Anon lived in the garret above my room and that made everything very pleasant indeed.

It is always paradise when two are alone in a garden of love; but let the world poke its face through the gate and the most felicitous dream vanishes like morning mist.

Driving away from the burning concentration camp that weird night of revolt, combat and release, Egon Fuchs had told me of the great turning point: the Nazis had invaded the land of my father's greatest hope: the war had entered a new stage of gigantic violence and ultimate destiny. I knew that much, but had no desire to think of violence and fate. There would be time enough for that; first I must get well; lacerated body and spirit must come to terms with life's alphabet before undertaking to read annunciations of fire against the endless sky.

Anon made this easy. The great conflicts of the world existed

for her as casually as the weather: it's a nice day, they are having a war.

Hague wired me from London saying he was coming to see me in a few days. Within twenty-four hours we were shaking hands in the lobby of my hotel. He had grown older; there were streaks of gray in his hair and lines around his mouth; but that boundless American energy of his had lost none of its bounce, nor had his friendship waned during the years. He took me to a café and over our first brandy expressed concern.

"You look like hell, Paul," he said. "They must have given you a thorough going-over."

"Let's not talk about it now," I said.

"The bastards. They'll get all that's coming to them. Have you caught up with the war yet?"

"I'm busy getting used to being alive."

"We've got to get you out of here," said Hague. "I'll arrange everything. You can fly to New York. How are you fixed for money?"

"I had some in Vienna."

"That's a great help. Some Gauleiter is probably using it right now to support two fags. I saw your home town three months ago."

"You did?"

"Yes; officially I'm still a neutral correspondent. I looked up some of your old friends."

"How is my uncle? And Professor Gross?"

"They are making old man Gross's life miserable. I left him and his wife some money. Uncle Peter has salvaged part of his income. He hates the New Order and is waiting for his spiritual guides to announce ex officio that fascism is *really* an evil."

"I suppose Vienna is one vast prison these days."

"Exactly. Why don't you ask me about another friend of yours?"

"Who, for instance?"

"Helga."

"What I saw of her the last time was enough."

"I thought you'd like to know she's married to a Gestapo official."

"Is she? Serves him right."

"Yes," said Hague, "he's doomed to say with his predecessors: she has given me the best years of her life and the worst of mine. When are you ready to start for London?"

"Today. There's nothing to keep me here."

"Give me a little time to fix things. I'll get you to England somehow, then we'll fly to New York together."

"Russell, you're a wonder. Thanks."

"About money," he said. "I can afford to give it to you, but you're not a man who accepts gifts easily. So I'll pay you in advance for work you're going to do for my papers when you reach America."

"What work?"

"You know at least seven languages, and at my offices there's enough translation to keep you busy a lifetime."

He handed me fifteen hundred dollars in travelers' checks—the largest sum I had ever received at one time. When Americans are generous, they certainly know how to do it.

"You won't have an easy time at first," Hague warned. "Last fall I spent an afternoon on my farm transplanting trees. You have to see roots to appreciate them. They are thick, heavy, strong. The tree clings by them tenaciously to the spot where it has grown. I had to move my trees ten feet and it was a major operation. After long digging, cutting and heaving, we finally lift the root, but part of it remains. When you finally transplant the tree, you must face it the way it faced before. We take a lot of trouble with trees. Men are not so carefully transplanted. A storm tears them up by the roots and hurls them anywhere to survive or perish as fate wills. The suffering of the exile must be frightful. I like to give trees and men a break."

"Thanks, Russell," I said. "You're very kind. Don't worry about me. I'll get along. What's happened to you these years?"

"Let me show you something," he said, smiling.

He pulled out his wallet and laid a snapshot on the café table. It showed a woman holding a child. The woman was strikingly handsome; the child was so beautiful my heart began to melt.

"That's my wife Beatrice," he said proudly. "And that's Judy. She's two and smart as a whip. Wait till you meet them!"

"When did all this happen?"

"After they shipped you off to prison. Didn't you get my letters? No, I suppose not. I've heard that concentration camp of yours was pretty terrible."

"I guess I didn't get a lot of letters. Anyone who wrote me was simply amusing Inspector Keller."

"You're alive. What could be better?" said Hague.

We went back to the hotel and had dinner. Anon served us and I was startled to see she was a stranger after all. Her legs suddenly became things to walk with; promised kisses faded from her lips into shadows of the unfamiliar. Is sensual joy enough to bind two people together? She belonged to neither past nor future, only to a present ready to vanish forever like a song casually heard

from a train rumbling through a strange country you will never see again.

What made Anon most remote now was the assault upon our dream by the real world: Hague was telling me at great length about the war, and for the first time I grasped a little of its incalculable magnitude and import.

We sat up late that night smoking and drinking, and Hague poured out stories of invasions, betrayals and resistances incredibly heroic. When I finally retired to my room, Hague's words surged through my brain irresistibly. I turned out the light and tried to sleep. It was difficult. Images of a dead life fluttered in the night like expiring flames.

For a long time prison torture had submerged Vienna for me; now, with vast explosions of apparition, there welled up from the cavern of forgotten things the city of my birth, youth and deepest aspirations with its magnificent river, canals, Bezirke, woods and homes. Here is Mother, her beautiful face aglow with love, her vibrant voice singing immemorial melodies of care and hope, her tenderness appearing as the whole universe to the child's unfolding soul: and here are those adored maternal eyes in which I first saw dreams which returned to lure me over far horizons hunting insubstantial traces of first and last things: and now above the blue Danube of memory I see fluttering through the air of restless night that little green book recounting man's oldest and newest struggles for justice: epochal curtains descending upon dying worlds, the glorious dawning of tomorrows becoming yesterdays as Mother kisses me tenderly and I go off to a war which settles nothing. Oh, here is the Vienna library, my spirit's home: books of knowledge, wisdom, and love from Homer's epic of man's early spring to this hour's monograph on death-dispensing, life-restoring radium: and those poets of the real, from Flaubert to Thomas Mann, witnessing through time and space eyewitness accounts from behind the tumultuous lines of history. I have always loved the poets best: poets in verse and prose, color and sound, apologists and prophets of man's soul, its boundless agony and hope, the earth's sublime potentials in the heart: Achtung und Dichtung, caution and creation: and here is the Daungasse, Father's realm, the courageous trumpets of the future.

And now, shimmering through the mists of remembrance, I see Ringstrasse and Guertelring embracing the voluptuous metropolis like a girdle of jewels: everything flows by on the supple waters of nostalgia: palaces, legations, hotels, the opera: Leopoldstadt brooding with the mysteries of Freud: the healing hand of Alser-

grund: St. Stephen's lofty tower chiming centuries of faith above the catacombs of princes: the Capuchin vaults guarding the chaliced hearts of Hapsburgs: the Hofburg's papyri, incunabula and parchments: then the great abbey of the Irish Benedictines opening a vista of cathedrals leading to Vindomina's iron stump. Here is my classroom at the university and beloved student faces raised in bright expectation of truths I myself am blindly seeking: and there, beyond the boulevards of marble empress and museums I see once more the flames explode through the palace of law as official cavalry rides down the crowded square of Schmerlingplatz for demanding bread and justice.

It is all theirs now, the prize of treacherous conquest: and healing with them at this cannibal feast of putrid power is Helga, friend and foe, living woman and plastic symbol, the darker seam of Europe's spirit, Faustian with never-sated will. For all the years I had known her and Europe's saga, had I ever understood the whole dynamic, the endless storm and stress which raged against the ascetic shadows of my own resisting spirit? The unyielding contest goes on: intolerant Faust, lusting forever to reign alone, hurls a clement Apollo into the dust of ataraxia: and the fanged statute of jungles re-emerges as an 80-mm. gun, camouflaged in the metaphysic of ever-distant futures, and bombards the kneeling crowd into homage before ego habeo factum. The gauntlet which once transformed the code of Christ, salvation's light, the special act of grace, into the ethic of imperative command, drops like a mask from the barbarian's hand as the old riddles unresolve themselves in blood.

But where is Father? Where is Floridsdorf firing expiring guns of hope under Rousseau's ancestral banner, torn but flying, from barricades of bread conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that man is the measure of all things! Oh, do not ask it! Exchange the bird's perspective for the frog's: embrace the earth whose fate speaks wholly now with shrapnel proclaiming under blackened skies the sacred duty to work and die, as the dread foe who should have perished with the embryos of time stamps his crooked cross of paresis upon a lacerated continent.

Father! Father! Was it all compassion, peace and kindly care; or was it still dominion, the freedom to do, the will to duration fighting and laboring immensely not for one's self or for the people, but for time, the future which perennially appears and reappears beyond the rim of the last visible horizon? Oh, then and then and then Hans truly belonged: was wholly of the present, his spirit laying down its laws for all: and Kurt was an archaic echo of a love whose

undeciphered meanings dwindle to footnotes of an irrestorable past as the age of free quest draws down curtains of night and hangs upon forbidden doors the warning *Do Not Disturb*.

Now I cannot get Kurt out of my mind: there he is on the scaffold awaiting the ax, speaking his last thoughts on earth, pleading with us for that benevolent insight into each other's hearts which alone can save us from the last destructions. Wasn't he perhaps right in a way? Our knowledge of earth, sea and heavy artillery is as great as our ignorance of the soul from which springs good and evil. Politicians throughout history have known how to govern men, not how to make them happy; and while men can foresee the course of the stars they cannot foresee their successors: the destiny of man is still among nature's blind cataclysms remaining to be resolved. Perhaps—who knows?—when today's deluge of blood is over and the skies clear in tomorrow's dawn for a long respite, science and art will labor earnestly in the direction of Kurt's "psychological revolution," saying to man: fool, look into thy heart and live! There came a moment in history when God was no longer a vindictive old man and became the universe itself: so love, as Kurt urged it from the scaffold, may come to mean not the compassion of a distant age, the charity of self-regarding alms-giving or the faith of credulity: but a new, most potent form of men's self-knowledge and mutual understanding: a mastery at last of the physics and metaphysics of human nature and conduct: the revolutionary discovery of techniques enabling us to convert destructive into creative urges, to beat the swords of the heart into plowshares.

Meantime the swords prevail. Think of Helga: her latest marriage was neither surprising nor inconsistent: she had always lusted after temporal power, regardless of origin, form or purpose: she had always managed to get it at every turn of fortune's wheel through her arsenal of tricks subtly combining inherited money, social connections, feminine charm encased in a stubborn will. Her greatest asset was the perfect self-deception of the narcissist. To the end she would be a woman who labels her dominion *love*, believes it by self-hypnosis, makes others believe it because they want to. Helga's relations with men were always marked by conflict. Some people think this is a sure sign of love. It is: if you like love with a heavy dash of sadism.

Tossing sleepless here in my Swiss hotel (how different is solitary confinement from solitude, that which is imposed from that which is freely chosen!) I tried to reconstruct the invisible present out of remembered skeletons of the past. One thing was clear: neither his elegant black uniform nor the temporary triumph of the

New Order could save Helga's Gestapo chief from the iron assaults of that vanity which was the substance of her self-assertion. No doubt she was already complaining to friends that her Nazi hangman failed to understand her real needs: her mouth was panting with disappointed thirst over this new mirage: her myopic eyes were already scanning the imaginary horizon of unresolved greed for the next fairy prince bringing illusory gifts of abject adoration and supreme power. On that day when the Nazis fall at last and a free regime takes over Vienna, an inevitable adventurer in its higher ranks will find Helga waiting for him with open arms and the latest shibboleth upon her ravenous lips.

By that time Uncle Peter and Professor Gross would be dead, their world mysterious to a generation nurtured on the most enormous clash of arms in all the annals, and severed forever from the umbilical cord which bound us to an irreversible past. But what they stood for would not die: somehow transformed, men of all faiths would survive into the new era whose rumbling tread we hear far-off through the roar of battle and whose shapes continue undefined: and then perhaps the spirit of my father will walk the earth again, ringing in the heart of every man the unappeased tocsin of justice.

All that was a long way off. First the Nazis must be stopped, crushed, utterly wiped off the face of the earth. And how did things stand? You know nothing and can no longer analyze what you know. But look, listen: what do you hear? Now dozing, now awake, lost alternately in dream and reverie, I grappled with shadowy fragments from Hague's epic of a globe in travail. In the darkness of the night and of my own soul, his lucid recital crumpled into formless anxieties: yet the echoes of the prodigious upheaval were shatteringly actual as they rolled through a mind half awake, half aware how really ill it was.

Neither knowledge nor reason, only the fractional memory of things heard now affirmed that appeasement having armed the aggressor to strike eastward, the Fuehrer conspired against the conspirators and a new sea of blood, immense, incalculable, surged over Europe more terrible than any before. The hysterical demiurge of the Goths released vast machines of death across the continent, intent upon destroying freedom, enslaving the world. Rome's ham actor, proudly flaunting the vicarious title *Imperator Africanus*, leaped smelling of elderly musk from the boudoir of Italia, whom he had for years perversely raped, into an airplane dropping shells upon defenseless children. Tanks of merciless slaughter thundered through capitals as diplomats continued to play their sanguinary

poker with fate: they offered bribes to Benito: the whore held out for a higher price: at the hour destined by the court astrologer, the blackshirted baboon fired a battery of antiquated bombast into conscripted cheers which infected the Piazza Venezia with a severe case of ennui: announcing his longing to break the confines of Mare Nostrum, he cast the die which never says die except to others, and burned ships of good sense behind him as he offered Europe and the universe a gold brick of peace and justice unconfirmed by two decades of Axis perfidy: and the inflated articulation of this condottieri with enfeebled prostate plunged the dagger of treachery into the back of its neighbor.

The great disaster of the Little Maginot Line shook earth to its foundations in a manner flabbergasting all the prophets; and peace in our time expired with a horrible shriek as eighty-ton armored monsters of Skoda steel spit the devouring fire of invasion across a paralyzed frontier, rolling remorselessly over the astonished remains of Rousseau, Napoleon, Zola, Jaurès. The last time I saw Paris, millions fled like famished beasts before the hunter's mania: mothers lay in crowded fields and looked through tears at a sky of meaningless stars as from their lonely wombs they forced the child whom the next hour shattered with an Axis bomb: and five centuries of civilization sank with a cry of despair into the cruel abyss of a remembered jungle. The Flanders pocket was brutally hemmed in with superior firepower, and a miracle of tenacious British courage salvaged an unbroken army from Dunkirk's immortal waters. Whole nations were lost: in one sector hostilities ceased at 12:35 A.M. as Rome collected its loot and countless battles resumed their roar of assault. And lo! England stood firm, its people unshaken, rocketing shells of liberty into skies dark with Messerschmitts of despotic death. The world's fate shuddered in a remorseless rain of bombs vibrating the air of a hemisphere: immense wheels of an Axis juggernaut thirsting for blood and plunder ground republics into crimson dust: premiers shot themselves in celebration of the Fuehrer's birthday: swastikas fluttered over Mount Olympus as the immemorial vulture of hate and vengeance exulted over the prostrate agony of Prometheus chained once more to the merciless rock: and the grandsons of Pericles and Byron, their backs to the Acropolis, fought like lions at bay.

Invasion swept all before it on seas and continents exhausted by their own credulity, and the primeval gorgon whose bloodstained jaws I had heard in Vienna chattering the jargon of a false tomorrow, now devoured its victims along the highway of dismantled flesh and rolled toward nightmares of world dominion. Torpedoes

shrilled on waves of death: flames exterminated towns of life and labor: my concentration camp became a harmless annex to the immeasurable prison called Europe: everywhere the crackbrained Gothic redeemer appeared full of promises: the butcher of the people wiped the blood from his hands on yesterday's treaties and raised a curtain of fire upon the second act of ingeniously calculated slaughter, setting bowls of shattered existence, carmine with lust and high politics, before the unappeased ghost of Arminius. As the dark shadow of the Enemy floated in a ten-motored bomber over the fractured continent, the racks released Gauleiter who promptly cashed in their party cards for the best available estates of inferior peoples, and distributed chains of slavery for all and sundry to mark the arrival of the New Order with a pseudo-Wagnerian blast of death's own trumpets. Treachery blitzed from land to land and every quisling was rewarded with thirty pieces of puppet government as in one village after another gravediggers collapsed from overwork. Up, up from countless airdromes Goering's flying killers rose into skies roaring with paranoia: parachutes of poison dropped with precision into the home of millennia: German tourists removed their black dominoes, whipped out waiting machine guns and, in the knightly spirit of Nazi heroism, spattered the nearest nursery with infant brains: Goebbels's ideologues jammed the air waves with the unimaginative dung of calculated deception and a horde of horst-wessels crashed the head of a rabbi into the head of a priest.

How swiftly the innumerable grains of a billion yesterdays are swept into the howling billows of a new eon while this afternoon's history outdates this morning's decisions. The sacrifice of peoples stumbles over poppyfields of red tape: the war will never end in victory for right till America is in: and China's marvelous millions perish, rise again and fight sublimely for the world's ramparts to save us all.

But see! they are launching daily everywhere the most terrific offensive of all time: tanks and guns erupt like steel volcanoes: and behind them, believe it or not, are creatures called men: and from sea to sea and pole to pole the earth trembles with spearheads shattering counterstrokes.

It's tough, Liberty! You won't win in a day, but win you must! And please for God's sake quit this airy-fairy optimism drugging the will to fight. O incredible years in which the assembled mob of super-dupermen, gorged with food seized from the lips of babes, crowded a continent roaring deliriously Heil! Heil! and mailing Chanel No. 5 to natural blondes at home anxious to share the glories of blind victory. Behold, then, kings, queens, premiers, cabinets and

mayors in exile; laborites, liberals, revolutionaries of a vanished day; authors of books that will live a hundred years: see them fleeing to London intent at last upon the struggle which from the beginning was sacred and irrepressible: they find shelter behind the white cliffs of Dover where hastily gathered guns bellowing fire against dark metal wings of the foe overhead are determined to combat this above all. See a people of indestructible freedom mobilize hunting rifles, cycles, fire extinguishers, shovels and pails of sand: and while trade-unions rapidly roll off the assembly belt devastating instruments of civilized warfare, a great persistent premier thunders through the globe with English force and reserve immortal rhetoric of righteous assurance, and calculates future strategy to safeguard Milton's heritage. Endless is the roar of desperate unyielding conflict as lands, seas and skies crack with death and resistance to evil, and Liberty rises from a suddenly remembered grave crying across world-wide pits of blood to the heart and will of mankind embattled for existence and right against the vilest foe of hell, crying aloud with all the passion, wisdom and certainty of all the ages: *I am the resurrection and the life!*

And now the panzer divisions rumble eastward, full of appetite and confidence, as Napoleon murmurs to the deserted Invalides: this is a bad business, I beat the Russians every time but it doesn't get me anywhere! The hour is here: a great people retreats before the demented fury: men die like insects that liberty may live: ten years of the most extraordinary labor in history is sent up in smoke with heroic calculation to encumber the enemy: once more an aggressor sinks into vast obstinate snows: his merciless robots crumple before the wrath of a nation shielding its way of life: and scattered across endless vistas of a loved homeland, guerrillas raise their rifles skyward and swear never to lay them down till the last fascist on their violated soil is utterly destroyed: O for shattering our villages, for bleeding our country, for killing our children, for terrors and torments poured out upon my people, I swear to avenge myself bitterly, mercilessly, ceaselessly upon the enemy: yea, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth: I swear I would rather die in relentless battle than allow myself, my wife, my children or the Soviet people to become fascist slaves: and if by weakness, cowardice or ill fate I break this oath and betray my people, let me die a traitor's death at the hands of my comrades! And suddenly foe and world alike open their eyes in unprepared astonishment as a great people halts in the tracks of retreat: a Pomeranian noble with thirty-six generals and a romantic poet in his family tree receives a surprising kick in the seat of his swastika. They stand! they hold out! they counter-

attack! they surge forward! they will never surrender! And in the relentless winter night eighty-ton tanks confide to each other that you cannot conquer love of independence, as all over the globe lorgnettes are raised in the very best circles to inspect him whom the millions had trusted, the man of steel, heir of the giant Gemini, master craftsman of a new nation who had foreseen and prepared for the irrepressible conflict. Ah, if Hans and Kurt and my father had only lived to see this hour of fate when the war of annihilation and survival rages before the gates of the future!

2

*The mind swims, full of lamps,
Among foundations of the epoch.
—Stephen Spender.*

HAGUE FIXED EVERYTHING with American speed and precision. He rushed from embassy to airdrome, obtained all sorts of official and semiofficial papers for me, arranged a plane to fly me to Zurich, Bellinzona and Milan. The route he arranged is irrelevant to my story, but one or two points need to be explained. The simplest thing was to fly from Milan via Barcelona to Lisbon and from there to proceed to New York either by clipper or a nine-day boat. I wanted to do that, but Hague objected I was too ill, too remote from the world which had sprung up during my three years' imprisonment and in too dangerous a spot as a man who had escaped from a camp which had been sent up in flames. He insisted I take a long, roundabout way to England where he would meet me and personally supervise my journey to America in his company. It was only after I agreed to this circuitous route that Hague left for London, where he had some important business to wind up.

At that moment I would have agreed to go by way of the moon, so anxious was I to get to America. As one pleasant way of brushing up on my English, I hastened to buy a copy of Walt Whitman's poems, and they made the world appear immense and full of certainty. Walking through the hazards of the village street and gazing upon all things with his eyes, as one sometimes gazes through the eyes of a great poet, I was now and then privileged to look into the faces of men and women and see God. But most of the time it was America I heard singing endless announcements, everything going onward and outward over the roofs of the world, done with indoor complaints, libraries, querulous criticisms, traveling the open road strong and content, seeking in this broad earth of ours, amid the measureless grossness and slag, that seed of perfection which nestles enclosed and safe within its central heart.

In a week Hague wired me from London that everything was set. I was to fly to England the following morning, meet him at the clipper and sail the skies for Manhattan.

Right after supper I packed my things and went out into the street to look for the last time at the continent which I was leaving perhaps forever. I felt sad: it's not easy for any man to tear himself from the soil of his birth, dreams, loves and sufferings. Yet I was glad to make the break, infinitely glad to go to America.

I sauntered down to the corner café, ordered a stein of beer, lit my pipe and spread out a copy of the London *Times* three weeks old. It was still news, and there was a reassuring continuity in recurrent references to "our Christian-democratic civilization." But how could one read with all that noise? At the large, round table near by a group of men and women were arguing at the top of their voices.

"Suppose they do save Leningrad?" said a deep, acrid baritone. "They won't last. They're doomed, I tell you. The Nazis will cut through the Red Army like a knife through butter."

The voice sounded vaguely familiar. I put down the *Times* and looked up.

Don't let anyone tell you this isn't a small world, doctor, especially these days when men are uprooted and hurled from border to border seeking refuge from whirlwinds of blood. The speaker was Ludwig Hauck, Vienna café wit and quondam expert on the land of socialism. He saw me at once and came to my table.

"Why, as I live and breathe! Professor Schuman!" he exclaimed. "What are *you* doing here? We heard you were in a concentration camp."

"I have been honorably discharged with a gold medal," I said. "When did you arrive?"

"Yesterday. I bribed my way out of Paris. Can you think of some stunt to get to America?"

"I stopped thinking long ago," I said. "How about you?"

I had never trusted Hauck; there was no use telling him anything now.

"We're settling the war at our table," he said. "Won't you join us?"

My new beer companions obviously considered Ludwig Hauck a man of the world, a great specialist on the causes, courses and consequences of the war, particularly its Russian phase. The conversation revealed that several Swiss papers had been reprinting pieces which he had written from cheap Paris hotels about a vast, complex country he had not seen for years. Soon the conversation became a monologue. Hauck leaned back in his chair, twiddled his beer stein and held forth to an admiring audience on precisely how and why the Nazis would swallow one-sixth of the globe. And at moments he spoke as if that might be a just retribution for the

Pact which he insisted had shattered the Peoples' Front, mocked the faith of millions, and for the first time in the annals of man declared ideology a matter of taste.

I excused myself, saying I had to rise at dawn, and returned to my hotel.

The moment I entered my room, I began to think of Vienna again: the city haunted me like the ghost of a loved woman. Never, never through all the disasters and miracles of our time: never, never through whatever victory and peace would terminate this sanguinary hour could that old life return.

How far off it all seemed. Yet out of the mists of memory there came clearly that Floridsdorf meeting at which Ludwig Hauck clashed with the speaker of the evening. That was the night I first got to know Kurt.

Forget all that: the sooner you wipe Kurt out of your mind, and everything connected with him, the better for everybody: let the dead past bury its dead: grasp time firmly and lift yourself toward the renovating future!

I said that to myself over and over again and it didn't work. As you observed yesterday, doctor, at this time I was already deep in the throes of a severe case of obsessional ideas with partial insight. I simply *had* to account for Kurt's life from the day he fell in love with Dante to the day his head fell under the ax. Do you really think that behind this obsession was the fantasy that "all men are brothers"? Only in this case I was not Cain: I was Abel. Having myself perished under the ax and been capriciously resurrected, I identified myself not with the executioner but with the victim.

As I turned out the light and tried to sleep, a memory of Kurt kept coming back in waves of alternate confusion and apathy. Close, close, clearly in every detail I could see that Floridsdorf meeting at which my father reads announcements for *The Future*: the auditorium is crowded: Kurt is on the platform, young, sensitive, ardent in his faith: Ludwig Hauck heckles him: there is an argument about the war which is lurking seven years off: the crowd is agitated: Kurt reads his prophetic clipping: and today his unyielding faith is being justified in supreme combat while his ashes are lost in a concentration camp incinerator.

It began to rain. Through the dark I heard the drops tapping on my windowpane as if the world wanted to come in. I hoped it would clear up for tomorrow's flight. Was that my door opening? The guards . . . Sergeant Muehlbach's torture chamber. . . .

Anon leaned through the dark and kissed me tenderly. She smelled of soap; her bosom was warm with comfort and seduction.

She brushed away my eager arm and sat down on the edge of the bed, saying she wanted to talk.

"You're going tomorrow, Paul?"

"Yes. I must."

"I'm sorry. It's been wonderful. Can't you stay another week?"

"I wish I could."

"Why must all nice things end?"

Her eyes were very bright. I always notice eyes, the mirror of the soul looking upon the outer, revealing the inner world, full of the light of life itself. She leaned over and whispered:

"Maybe it's better you're going. If you stayed, I think I'd fall in love with you."

"You don't know I've already begun to fall in love with you?"

"Are you running away?"

"No: I must go for other reasons. There's absolutely no help for it."

She kissed me with a feeling all the more profound because sensuality had been transmuted into a longing for love. Surely, surely it's impossible to be wholly casual: the heart demands its own rights. But see the all-pervasive dominion of the unequal! There is inequality in love, too. For this drop of life's richest elixir, accepted as make-believe, Anon wept tears of gratitude and joy and left me swiftly in the dark.

I thought of the Easter scene in *Faust*: a longing pure and not to be described drove me to wander over woods and fields: and in the mist of hot abundant tears I felt a world arise and live for me. That poet-philosopher spoke truly who said that at night the universe of space triumphs over matter: it is then that world-fear, the most creative of prime feelings, is strongest, pouring forth the ripest, deepest images of inward life: and now that I ceased thinking of the lovely young girl who had just left me and began to think of all the anonymous millions in the world for whom she was a living metaphor at once voluptuous and spiritual, I realized more certainly than ever that the time had arrived when man must move from nature to history. That had been Kurt's most passionate dream: to follow the poets who had written about man in nature with an epic on man in history: to contribute his share to the new art of the organic, of history and life and all that bears the sign of direction and destiny: but his body had perished on the scaffold, and before that his spirit had died of the inevitable heartbreak which dooms all who press the square toward the circle too stubbornly.

What square? What circle?

Have you not yet broken from the classical heritage in which

number was the essence of all things, where measure was erected as a magic dam against the sea of semblances immeasurable? They wanted to square the circle and failed: how can you toy with that, even in reverie, even as metaphor? The Pythagoreans knew the real secrets of number, and classical society killed them to maintain its world-view: men have been crucified not only because of love but because of knowledge, too. Even pure mathematics had to wage a long, secret war against the notion of magnitude. Somewhere I had read: the liberation of geometry from the visual and of algebra from the notion of magnitude, and the union of both beyond all elementary limitations of drawing and counting is the great structure of function-theory, the grand course of Western number-thought. But does this hold true, if it is true, for mathematics alone? Doesn't it of necessity become the foundation which determines structures for art, science and society? The epic of man in history is no longer a search for absolute balance but functional equilibrium.

I wished Kurt were here to discuss these things with me: it was necessary to tell him that his doctrine of love would have to abandon the realm of morality and find fulfillment in the realm of number and techniques: not love but the equilibrium of psychic strains: not justice but the equilibrium of social forces in opposition. And yet, would not even these new terms and technologies be compelled to function with invisible, intangible forces devastatingly, creatively real?

I felt very depressed now. The past I wanted to forget weighed heavily on all my spirit; the sum of years, "as it were a tale that is told," appeared to add up to senseless suffering.

What will you do in New York? Where is your new place in the world—if any? The Swiss village was an illusion, an interlude of self-indulgence, a mirage of insubstantial hope. Now that I was going to leave it for actual places and people, I saw how thoroughly my old life had been destroyed everywhere except in memory, and how vague the future was. This was chaos again; and in this turbulent night of the soul, I felt unborn in the womb of time, caught in the fear of unknown days to come.

What did I have to offer my new land of refuge? Another story of concentration camp life? A book on human freedom nobody wanted which had been destroyed? A manuscript on Eusebius I no longer possessed which had been declared a forgery?

I tried to recall the vision of Eusebius, ghost companion of my vanished dreams. How did it go? The details refused to come. I made an effort to surrender my senses to the scene in the realm of reality which had preceded and evoked it, but could get only as far as the scaffold.

Thought cracked through my resisting brain. Forget it all: seek refuge in perfect love of the absolute if you like: pray if you can.

Instead, the night whirled with the old dance of the square and the circle to the wild music of the rational in three-quarters irrational time. Long, long ago, nearer to the amoeba, war made sense: food was scarce, populations pressed upon the means: fight or starve! Today man is rich and men are poor: our neolithic hearts lust with the power and precision of dive-bombers: we aspire toward measureless heights like gods and out of mysterious habit perish like beasts on primeval battlefields: there is enough for all everywhere and the world is blind in a deluge of its own blood. When men had no power over nature, they could survive only by power over men: today with this much power over nature we need no power over men: but this means ferreting out the deepest springs of human nature, the ultimate secrets which carve our fate. Kurt was right, it seemed: men who have learned to fly can learn to be free: we must discover the technology of justice, charity and love.

And still the vision of Eusebius veiled its face from tumultuous memory. I could recall nothing except the meaning of the saint's name: *pious*!

But you did have a vision! A fragment of your obsessed soul leaped forth into the external world and haunted you from the wall of your prison cell with riddles whose answers time engulfed long ago in its sweep toward the sea of oblivion. How can you refuse to face the warning? You are not a man re-created, floating through the joys of a synthetic paradise with the voluptuous, forbidden youth of Anon: you are a refugee, an escaped prisoner from a concentration camp whose torments have deranged the rational faculties. Should I see a doctor in New York? That was in the distance. Now forget: try to pray.

The lure of America became immense, the longing of four centuries of Europeans for the most glamorous of eldorado's suffused my being with wonder and hope. How did they treat exiles in the land founded by exiles? On a stern and rockbound coast the Pilgrim Fathers planted Milton's heritage, and lo! the golden fruit, the Declaration of the Rights of Independence! That was a sublime dream, too, but to hell with the square and the circle: expect little and everything you receive will appear much.

But wait: see above the vast horizon of the ancestral century the man against the sky. Was it in Springfield Lincoln made that speech which now broke through the clearing mist of memory? Yes, before he came to the white house from which the greatest of his successors, with courage a thousand years will not forget or fail to honor, now scans a world of enormous combat and reads aright the

stars of destiny by whose luminous hope his mighty people must advance unyielding. Springfield it was where that giant against the American sky announced that they who molded the Declaration did not intend to declare all men equal in all respects, did not mean all were equal in color, size, intellect, moral development, social capacity; they defined in what respects they did consider all men equal: in certain inalienable rights: life, liberty, pursuit of happiness; they did not assert all men were then actually enjoying that equality, did not claim they were about to confer it upon them; they had no power to confer such a boon; they meant to declare the right so that its enforcement might follow as fast as circumstances would allow; to set up a standard maxim for free society which should be familiar to all, revered by all, constantly looked to, constantly labored for; though never perfectly attained, constantly approximated: and thereby constantly spreading, deepening its influence, augmenting the happiness and value of life to all people of all colors everywhere. Yes, Springfield, Illinois, it was. . . .

My head ached; my bones shook with chill and fever as the sleepless night grew vast with useless regret and senseless foreboding.

Pray.

For what? What for?

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory. . . .

And at this moment I saw without warning the mysterious light which began to flood the wall opposite; the music of *Prelude, Chorale and Fugue* filled the world and the second vision appeared before me vibrant with archaic speech and adumbrations of years unborn.

3

*Draw, if thou canst, the mystic line,
Severing rightly his from thine,
Which is human, which divine.*

—Ralph Waldo Emerson.

I

(A class of catechumens. The young students listen with rapt attention to their teacher Eusebius. On one of the rear benches sits the deacon Basil rapidly taking notes.)

EUSEBIUS: That last question was to the point, beloved brothers and sisters; but it's not easy to answer. Why do we Christians, still a persecuted faith within the empire, fight one another bitterly in hostile sects each of which claims to be sole interpreter of the truth. Let us examine the matter thoughtfully. There are scores of sects speaking in the name of the Master: basically they may be divided into three categories. There are those who like the Ebionites . . . *(smiles, points to a catechumen)* Tell me, Marcus: what do these sects believe?

MARCUS: They completely deny the divinity of our Master.

EUSEBIUS: Right. Now, Cornelia: what do the Gnostic sects preach?

CORNELIA: They deny the Master's manhood entirely.

EUSEBIUS: Correct. That leaves us the third category of sects. These acknowledge the manhood of the Master and also some Deity, some efflux, irradiation or emanation of the primal godhead. None of these ideas is very clear. It is assumed that the Logos, the Wisdom, the Spirit of God indwells in various manners and degrees within the Master, but the terms have not yet been defined beyond dispute.

(Basil stops taking notes, raises his hand.)

EUSEBIUS: Yes, my dear Basil.

BASIL *(craftily)*: You say the terms have not yet been defined. But our church, the one true faith, has defined them. Does this mean you doubt the one true doctrine? *(Sits down.)*

EUSEBIUS *(smiling kindly)*: Not at all. I accept the one true doctrine. But I think catechumens ought to understand what they

believe; ought to know what the controversy is about. (*Turns to students.*) We must not assume there are no difficulties when the difficulties are so great. And we must not permit theological disputes, important as they are, to obscure our essential teaching.

(*Basil begins to take notes furiously.*)

MARCUS: What would you say is the most serious difficulty?

EUSEBIUS: It's hard to say. One is to maintain the plenary godhead of the Son, the Redeemer, without infringing on the sole, original principality of the Father. Or put it another way: how can we admit subordination without inferiority? The Monarchians assert one primary Principle, yet acknowledge the divinity of the Redeemer. Against them are those who refuse to acknowledge a real or definite subordination of the Redeemer.

BASIL: Where do you stand, Eusebius?

EUSEBIUS (*continues to address the class*): This difference has led to bitter polemics. The Monarchians are charged with the appalling doctrine that the Father, the one Primary Principle, must have suffered on the cross. That is why they are called Patripassians. They reply that their opponents, who refuse to define the subordination of the Son, are worshippers of two gods or Ditheists.

BASIL (*rising, in a loud voice*): Where do you stand?

EUSEBIUS: (*facing Basil with great dignity*): I believe in our church and its hierarchy: I am content to abide by any decision it may make on these mysteries. But in the long run, I do not think the answer will matter. All that will matter will be the essential teaching, the great liberating idea.

BASIL: What is *that*?

EUSEBIUS: That also is a difficult question, and since our time is up we can discuss it in our next lesson.

(*The class breaks up. Several students put their arms around the waist of Eusebius and walk out with him, talking earnestly. Basil slinks out of the classroom. The scene fades into the church.*)

2

(*The residence of Bishop Polyclitus. He is seated at his work-table. Basil is handing him some notes through which Polyclitus glances gravely.*)

POLYCLITUS: Yes, Eusebius is a great disappointment. His heart's in the right place; I wish his head were.

BASIL: Do you know what he told the Roman judge the day you were sent to prison?

POLYCLITUS: A number of eyewitnesses told me. It was bad, very bad.

BASIL: That's not all. He is teaching students that our essential idea is more important than theological disputes!

POLYCLITUS: Is he saying that?

BASIL: I heard him myself this morning. You have my notes there.

POLYCLITUS (*looking at the notes again*): Leave them here. I want to go through them carefully.

BASIL: I tell you this fool is dangerous. He sows confusion wherever he goes. He is guilty of heresy in everything but name.

POLYCLITUS: I wouldn't go that far, Basil. He needs a good talking to, that's all.

BASIL: Why coddle the idiot? Throw him out!

POLYCLITUS: We must not excommunicate lightly, my dear Basil. There aren't many able teachers like Eusebius. We must think twice before expelling him from our ranks. First let us try to save him. Think of the effect on the flock. Eusebius is popular.

BASIL: You are right. We must destroy his popularity first: then we can expel him without difficulty.

POLYCLITUS: Every action we take must be considered from the viewpoint of the general good. We cannot appear to be jealous, capricious or arbitrary. As long as Eusebius enjoys general confidence and favor, we must be cautious.

BASIL: But if he loses general confidence and favor?

POLYCLITUS: Then we shall be compelled, much against our inclination, to obey the will of the people and exclude Eusebius.

BASIL: Consider the matter settled.

POLYCLITUS: What do you intend? You are not going to spread lies about him?

BASIL: No; all I have to do is to spread one little truth about him, a truth taken out of its context and circulated without explanation. That truth will spawn more lies in a day than either of us could invent in a year.

POLYCLITUS: What will you say?

BASIL: I will tell one person, in the strictest confidence, on his sacred word of honor not to reveal it, that Eusebius is under a cloud. That's true, isn't it?

POLYCLITUS: Yes, he is under a cloud.

BASIL: I won't say why. I won't explain a thing. I will merely let people's imagination run riot. At first it will be repeated that Eusebius has committed some trivial error and is under a cloud and it will be straightened out soon because he is a pious and able teacher beloved by the hierarchy and everyone else. But since we shall remain silent and no kind of explanation will come from us, the story will change from day to day. Eusebius himself will con-

tribute to the development of the myth; he will be terribly upset; he will look anxious, therefore guilty. By the end of a week it will be generally assumed he has committed a crime too terrible for us to describe or explain and that the least we can do is to excommunicate him.

POLYCLITUS: Basil, you have an evil wit, but it has its uses. I shall prepare an episcopal synod to try Eusebius on charges of heresy. This trial will be held one week from today.

BASIL: Thank you, father. (*He starts to leave.*)

POLYCLITUS (*looking over Basil's notes*): Oh, just a minute!

BASIL (*halting at the door*): Yes, father.

POLYCLITUS: Send Eusebius to me. I want to have a little talk with him.

BASIL: Yes, father.

(*He leaves. The moment Polyclitus is alone, there is a close-up of his face. With Basil the bishop appeared sly, unscrupulous, envious, everything which would make Basil feel near to him. In solitude the bishop's face assumes an expression of superb dignity and power. Every great leader must be a great actor: he is the mirror of his age: Talma took lessons from Napoleon: the leader must be all things to all men, unless he is that rare type of moral giant who comes once in a century and is truly great by being only one thing to all men—and that thing himself. At this moment the look of grave anxiety on the face of Polyclitus reveals concern over his own position and that of the church, the embodiment of the great idea. The close-up now fades into the full figure of the bishop, then his study. He sits reading Basil's notes. There is a knock on the door.*)

POLYCLITUS: Come in! (*Eusebius enters.*) Ah, it's you, my dear son.

EUSEBIUS (*approaching the bishop's worktable*): Good day, father. You sent for me?

POLYCLITUS (*kindly*): Yes; take a seat. (*Eusebius sits down on a wooden bench near the worktable. The bishop goes on in a grave, almost tender voice.*) My son, I hardly know how to begin. What I have to say to you is not pleasant. But we are old friends and brothers in the True Faith. I am sure you will understand that what I have to say to you is for your own good.

EUSEBIUS: I know that, father. I have the utmost confidence in your wisdom and goodness.

POLYCLITUS: That's fine. The situation is this: you have caused the hierarchy some displeasure.

EUSEBIUS (*alarmed, confused: he hasn't the slightest idea what the bishop is driving at*): I, father? What have I done? Whatever

it is, I am ready to do penance. I want nothing less in this world or the next than to displease my church or its leaders.

POLYCLITUS: That's a splendid attitude, my son. It does you and us great credit. Still, you ought to know how we feel. You did not conduct yourself properly before the pagan judge. You said things you should not have said, and omitted things you should have said.

EUSEBIUS: Father, what you tell me causes me the greatest anguish. I have tried to be a loyal communicant since boyhood, and have never had any trouble whatever with the church authorities until now. To think I should be guilty of misconduct after all these years! It's the greatest possible calamity for me.

POLYCLITUS: Do you recall your colloquy with Judge Titus?

EUSEBIUS: I think I do. It began this way . . .

(As Eusebius starts to recite his conversation with the Roman judge, the vision fades into the market place.)

3

(A large crowd is gathered in heated dispute. Voices collide, people gesticulate in surprise or anger: something obviously agitates them, but so far their words are indistinguishable. Basil approaches, enters the center of the crowd.)

BASIL: What's the excitement, brothers and sisters?

MAN: Haven't you heard? It's all over town. Eusebius has been excommunicated!

BASIL: Nonsense! Who says so?

MAN: Archdeacon Ambrose here.

AMBROSE *(a heavy, bald, middle-aged man of severe dignity)*: He is exaggerating, Basil. I merely said Eusebius *ought* to be excommunicated.

BASIL *(severely)*: Who gave you the right to decide such matters, archdeacon? That's for an episcopal synod to decide.

AMBROSE *(apologetically)*: Of course, of course! I was just expressing an opinion.

BASIL: And what has Eusebius done that he should be excommunicated?

AMBROSE: He's a heretic!

BASIL: That's news to me. He has always been and still is a devoted son of the church.

WOMAN: That's what I was telling them!

SECOND MAN: Yes, and one of the finest teachers we have.

THIRD MAN: A real saint.

AMBROSE: But he's under a cloud just the same. Better people

than Eusebius have slipped down the dangerous path which leads from piety to heresy. Every dog of a schismatic begins as a loyal son of the church, yet from the day he is born every heretic carries the seed of Satan in his bosom.

BASIL: What you say is true as a general principle, my dear Ambrose. But you ought to be careful how you apply that principle: and to whom. What has Eusebius done?

AMBROSE: They say he has taken advantage of women who come to him for confessional.

WOMAN: That's a lie! Ask the women; they'll tell you there's not a purer, more saintly man than Eusebius.

(There is a commotion on the edge of the crowd. The people make room. Judge Titus, elegantly dressed, enters the circle, attended by a high-ranking army officer. A great hush falls over the crowd.)

JUDGE: Go on, go on, my friends: keep talking. I am not on the bench now, and you people fascinate me.

(The crowd draws together in silence.)

OFFICER: They stink.

JUDGE: You are given to harsh judgment, Gaius Flavius.

OFFICER: Who follows this new, barbarous dogma? Weavers, shoemakers, fullers, illiterate clowns.

JUDGE *(smiling)*: You see, Gaius, the pen is mightier than the sword. You may not know it, but you are quoting Celsus.

OFFICER: Never heard of him. Don't have to. Look with your own eyes: fools, lowborn fellows.

JUDGE: That's Trypho's phrase.

(The crowd looks furious but dares not move.)

OFFICER: Trypho? Another one of your scribblers, I suppose. I go by my own eyes. Look at this mob: worn with want and famine; men collected from the lowest dregs of the people; stupid, credulous women; unpolished fools; illiterate, ignorant even of the most sordid facts of life; vile creatures, blockheads, withered old fellows; men of downcast, pale visages who never smile. That's it: look at them: they never smile!

JUDGE: Caecilius said all that before you. But that eminent scribbler and you, my dear Gaius Flavius, both missed the real point. If these people were only what you've just said, they would constitute no danger to the empire. No, there's something else which escapes you—the most important fact of all.

OFFICER: What's important about this scum?

JUDGE *(turning to the crowd, which shrinks back a little)*: Christians, I envy you the feeling of unity which holds you together. You are everywhere. Each of you is a member of a society which spreads in all quarters of the empire. Most of you are lowly, poor,

oppressed; a few come from our aristocracy. But what impresses me most is the gains you are making in learned and philosophical circles. Gaius Flavius is a soldier: he cannot understand that. I am something of a scholar and statesman: I know it is there the greatest danger for us lurks. Writers, philosophers and rhetoricians are lured by the ethical power of your teaching and its philosophical content. Your faith appears to be at once a simple way of life for the common man and a profound system of thought about the universe for the speculative mind. What a combination!

OFFICER: These vermin should be exterminated!

JUDGE: We shan't be able to exterminate them, Gaius. But I think we can count on something else.

AMBROSE (*unable to contain himself*): We are unconquerable because we are a community, a brotherhood, a fellowship.

JUDGE: Well said, my good man! But that's not all you have. Four thousand years of history have taught us the pattern. All these popular movements begin with fellowship, proceed to unity and end in authority. Naturally, authority is necessary; nobody knows that better than we Romans. But where authority begins, fellowship ends. Love surrenders to power.

OFFICER: Love! Why, these castrates even forbid marriage!

BASIL (*steps forward smiling with a sly, ingratiating look on his face*): Your friend does not understand, Titus. There are heretical sects which want to outshine us in virtue; they wish to make everyone wholly ascetic. Please don't confuse us with those vipers!

AMBROSE: No, no, your honor! We want only priests to be chaste. Others not only may, they should marry. (*He closes his eyes and begins to chant Tertullian.*) How can I adequately detail the felicity of that marriage which the church cements, the offering ratifies, the benediction seals, angels proclaim, the Father regards as valid? How dear is the bond of two of the faithful, of one hope, one discipline, one and the same service! Both are comrades, both fellow slaves; together do they prostrate themselves; they pass their seasons in fasting together, with mutual instruction, mutual exhortation, mutual support. Together they are in the Truth Faith; together in trials, persecutions, seasons of refreshment. Neither has secrets from the other, neither avoids the other, neither is burdensome to the other. Their alms are without anguish, their sacrifice without hindrance, their daily diligence without obstruction. They do not need to wish each other joy with trembling, nor bless each other without words—

JUDGE: Wait a minute, my friend! Gaius Flavius is a soldier; he is interested in your views and practices of sex, love and marriage. I am not interested. We are all human. There are actions

and reactions. Rome was virtuous until her decline. Have you forgotten how Cato roared at the corruption of our morals by Greek exiles? And now that we deny ourselves the satisfaction of no lust whatever, you are bound to go to the other extreme. Today the spirit rebels against the excesses of the flesh; in the course of time the flesh will rebel against the excesses of the spirit. But all that concerns me little. I am interested in other problems; and now that the decrees against you have been lightened and you lead a tolerated existence, there are many illuminating things you can tell me.

BASIL (*craftily*): And you will use the answers against us in the next persecution?

JUDGE: It's entirely up to you whether you want to act as a criminal of your own free will, or like the free man which the law at this moment permits you to be.

BASIL: What do you want to know?

JUDGE: How did your organization enlarge its sphere in the empire?

BASIL: I don't know.

JUDGE: By what process did you creep onward, first toward dangerous, then equal, finally superior numbers?

BASIL: Because our cause is just.

JUDGE: You're something of a wit, I see. Tell me then, from what order, class and race did you make the greatest number of converts?

BASIL: I can't recall.

JUDGE: By what channels did you war against the official beliefs of our times? (*Basil grins in silence.*) Don't you understand that question?

BASIL: Oh, the question is clear enough but my recollection is not.

JUDGE: What, you have no memory? Come, my dear fellow: according to your faith, angels need no memory because nothing ever deflects their gaze from the divine essence. But you are no angel; you are, I believe, a man. Try to remember: to what extent do you people work openly and to what extent secretly?

BASIL: I don't know if there is any secret work.

JUDGE (*smiling*): I should have expected your answers.

BASIL: And I should have expected your questions.

JUDGE: Didn't you? Tell me this: weren't you people just discussing someone's excommunication? Or did I hear wrong? (*Nobody answers.*) Never mind: at least you can tell me your official views on excommunication; these must be in the books; there is no secret about them.

AMBROSE: Excommunication seeks to protect the church rather than punish the sinner.

JUDGE: That was the original object?

AMBROSE: Yes. St. Matthew prescribes the following sequence: first there is a private admonition of the sinner; then admonition in the presence of witnesses; then admonition in the presence of the church. Finally, if the sinner fails to repent, he is excluded from all church privileges. There may, of course, be variations in this sequence, especially in the case of the most monstrous of all sins.

JUDGE: Which is?

AMBROSE: Heresy.

OFFICER: I say, Titus, haven't you had enough of this damned nonsense? We'll miss the circus.

JUDGE: By all means let us not miss the circus.

(They leave. The crowd disperses. Only Basil and Archdeacon Ambrose are left, their figures in close-up.)

BASIL: What's all this about excommunicating Eusebius?

AMBROSE: That's what I was going to ask you.

BASIL *(testing him)*: What have you heard?

AMBROSE: They say Eusebius is under a cloud. I could not have heard this unless he were in trouble, so I wanted to urge publicly what I suspect is being prepared secretly.

BASIL: You're a clever man, Ambrose. It's true: there will be an episcopal synod in five days. It will try Eusebius for heresy. You will serve as a member of the synod.

AMBROSE: I shall be happy to be of use to my church and my bishop.

(The scene fades out and into the bishop's room.)

4

(Polyclitus and Eusebius are seated at the worktable.)

POLYCLITUS: You realize then, my dear Eusebius, that you have committed a grave sin.

EUSEBIUS: But, father! I have never been Manichaean, Marcionite, Montanist or Pellagian; I have never adhered to the heretical madness of Donatists or Sabellians or any of the vile sects which fight our teaching and church.

POLYCLITUS: We know that. If you had been a heretic, we would have excommunicated you long ago. As it is, we still have faith in you. But you must see you are treading on dangerous ground.

EUSEBIUS *(in despair)*: But how, father? Tell me. I will do anything to correct my errors.

POLYCLITUS: You are wise to fear the natural consequences of heretical thoughts. Each of us has only one choice, and a dreadful one it is if we choose wrong. Inside the church, under its lawful bishop, is the realm of salvation: outside, in the realm of the devil,

the world of perdition! (*Eusebius buries his face in his hands.*) To offend the church is to take the irrevocable step to hell and damnation. Remember, my son, the faith of the heretic and schismatic is no faith, his holiness no holiness, his martyrdom no martyrdom.

EUSEBIUS (*looking up with tears in his eyes*): Do you count me among these perverse enemies of the Faith, father?

POLYCLITUS: No, no, my son. To be sure, there are tempestuous natures among us who have begun to apply the opprobrious terms of heresy against you. Some have even urged me to denounce you in public. But I know you too well to indulge in such rash actions. That is why I am admonishing you in private.

EUSEBIUS (*with profound gratitude*): Thank you, father.

POLYCLITUS: You have told me your version of your trial before Judge Titus. You spoke truly. I have some notes here (*he lifts Basil's tablet*) taken by one of our people in the courtroom and these substantiate your story.

EUSEBIUS: I always seek to tell the truth to the best of my ability.

POLYCLITUS: Good, good! But that is not the point at issue. Take this sentence from your colloquy with the judge (*he reads*): "The hierarchy is not all good but the hierarchy is not all." Mmmm . . . Then again: "What is important is the revolutionary idea we have released into the world, the essence of our teaching." You did say that, didn't you?

EUSEBIUS: Yes, father, but—

POLYCLITUS: Then again yesterday, in the class for catechumens . . . (*He picks up another of Basil's writing tablets, looks quickly for the desired passage.*) Mmmm. . . Here it is: "All that will matter will be the essential teaching, the great liberating idea." You did say that, didn't you?

EUSEBIUS: Yes. But, father—

POLYCLITUS: You repudiated the church! You belittled our bishops! To a pagan judge at that, an imperial official sending your brothers to prison and the stake! And you said this to ignorant catechumens untrained to see through your heresies!

EUSEBIUS: No, no, father! I wasn't belittling or repudiating our church or its hierarchs! I was only trying to make people see the essential idea, the great thing we are teaching, the truth that all men are equal not in capacity—

POLYCLITUS (*with great deliberation*): My son, excommunication is a terrible thing, and it may strike with unequal force. I should consider my own excommunication tragic, but not catastrophic. My roots are in the old world; I am by origin a member of the imperial aristocracy; my friends in the empire would take me back; the pagans know, even better than we, the special value of the

prodigal son. But you, my poor Eusebius! You were never part of the old world; you never accepted it and it never accepted you; you looked upon it with horror from the first; both your parents were Christians; your father was beheaded for the True Faith. You loathed imperial life so much you fell into despair; despair brought you to faith; faith to serenity. For you it is absolutely impossible to go back; you can only follow the decisions of the episcopal synod or the dictates of your rebellious reason. Along the first way lies eternal salvation; along the second, unpardonable sin. Once you are excommunicated, your choice is inexorably between the most awful alternatives either of which means perdition: you will be forced to capitulate to the pagans or to adhere to the schismatics. Yes, yours would be a frightful option: apostate or heretic!

EUSEBIUS (*shuddering*): No, no, father! Neither apostate nor heretic!

POLYCLITUS (*rising*): Then consider well, Eusebius; think before it is too late! Who wants to excommunicate whom? Did you not excommunicate us before the Roman judge? Did you not excommunicate us from your heart when you perverted our teachings and labors, when you closed your eyes and ears to our tremendous achievements?

EUSEBIUS (*contritely*): If so, I have erred grievously.

POLYCLITUS: Repent, my son! Penitence is life, since it is preferred to death. Rush upon it, grasp it as a shipwrecked man grasps a plank. Yes, my son! Repentance and a full confession are the Pharos lights of human salvation!

EUSEBIUS (*after a moment of heartbreaking silence*): Father, you know all my thoughts; you know I mean no harm. I do not know what I am to repent, but I repent; I am not certain what it is I must confess, but I confess. I am ready to do whatever you think best in order to be fully reconciled with my church and its bishops, in order to serve God within the one true fold.

POLYCLITUS: Well spoken, my son! Now go back to your teaching. Do good work, then everything will be forgiven and forgotten.

EUSEBIUS (*rises, kisses the bishop's hand, his blue eyes sparkling with happiness*): Thank you, father, thank you from the bottom of my heart.

(*The scene fades into the school of catechumens.*)

5

(*The classroom is empty except for Basil and Archdeacon Ambrose. Eusebius enters, his face full of joy: but this gives way to astonishment as he sees the absence of his students.*)

EUSEBIUS: Where is everybody?

BASIL: Ambrose and I are here. (*He laughs cynically.*)

AMBROSE: There is a rumor you are under a cloud.

EUSEBIUS: But it's all been straightened out! I had a long talk with the bishop yesterday and he said: do good work, then everything will be forgiven and forgotten.

BASIL: Did he say that?

EUSEBIUS: He did.

BASIL: Then there is nothing for you to worry about, is there?

EUSEBIUS: Why aren't the students here?

BASIL: You know how gossip spreads. Everybody wants to be on the safe side. As soon as the episcopal synod settles your case, all the students will be back and we'll all love you again.

EUSEBIUS: Synod? What synod?

AMBROSE: The one that meets Tuesday, the one that's going to settle your hash—I mean your case.

EUSEBIUS: But I thought it's been settled!

BASIL: Only a dreamer like you could imagine that these things are settled privately. Do you think the bishop would undertake to decide such questions himself without consulting the rest of us?

EUSEBIUS (*weakly, completely paralyzed with surprise*): I suppose not . . .

BASIL: Next Tuesday, then. At the bishop's. Don't fail to come on time.

(*He rises and starts for the door, Ambrose following.*)

EUSEBIUS (*faintly*): I'll be there.

(*The scene fades into the interior of the church.*)

6

(*The basilica offers a resplendent spectacle. Under the altar sits Bishop Polyclitus, surrounded by members of the episcopal synod, including Archdeacon Ambrose and the amanuensis Basil. Behind them are priests and acolytes. Below, humble, bewildered, grief-stricken, stands Eusebius. The benches in the church are crowded with a full congregation come to witness the heresy trial.*)

POLYCLITUS (*rising, addressing the congregation*): Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, we are gathered here today for a very painful matter. We are about to judge a heretic.

EUSEBIUS: Father, father! I am not a heretic!

POLYCLITUS: That is not for you to decide, Eusebius. We alone can decide that. Whosoever shall not confess the True Faith as we have defined it is worse than a pagan; whosoever shall not confess the testimony as we have set it down is of the Devil; and whosoever shall pervert the oracles of the synod, that man is the first-born of Satan. Wherefore, let us forsake the vain doing of the heretics,

schismatics and apostates; let us denounce their subtle and deadly reasonings; and let us turn to the word which was delivered to us from the beginning and which we alone know!

EUSEBIUS: What have I done, father?

POLYCLITUS: He asks what he has done! Good: let us record his crime in all its horror. What you have done, Eusebius, is this: first before a pagan tribunal, then before catechumens innocently trusting your treacherous teachings you repudiated the hierarchy of our church and thereby the church itself!

EUSEBIUS: No, no, father! No, beloved brothers and sisters in Christ!

(There is a stir in the congregation and murmurs.)

POLYCLITUS *(furious)*: What! You dare deny your crimes!

EUSEBIUS: Please let me explain, father.

BASIL *(grinning, twinkling his eyes to assure everyone it won't do Eusebius a bit of good)*: Yes, yes, let him explain.

AMBROSE: I favor letting him explain, father.

POLYCLITUS: Very well, Eusebius; speak as long as you like. Let it not be said we condemned a man without a hearing.

(He sits down. The congregation whispers, then subsides. A great hush falls over the basilica.)

EUSEBIUS *(quietly, simply but with profound feeling which breaks through all his attempts to repress it)*: Beloved father, beloved brothers and sisters in the True Faith: the history of the old world is nearing a terrible end. See how all the slimy, crafty aspirations of this charlatan century are dying: waves of anger and fear circulate over the lands of the earth, obsessing and corrupting the lives of the rich and the powerful in public and in private: the terrible odor of death whirls across the pagan world: what good are their philosophers who do nothing but echo the great thinkers of other times? what good are their gods who have gone completely mad? Day in and day out the people of the world murder each other and do not understand that those to whom they do evil will do them evil in return. Greeks had the sublime word *democracy*, Romans the sublime word *republic*: but these great words have only made mankind unhappy: the antique creeds are dying not peacefully, at the end of a good life, but in the foulest rivers of blood, guilty and innocent. Look at the princes of the earth: what is the use of their festivals, carnivals and debauches? the aromatic couch, the bisexual paroxysms of purchased love? the mountains of food, the costly chalices sparkling with wine and ipecac? No use whatever! The perfumes, the genitals, the music cannot hide their fear! It is all murder! *(In spite of themselves, the members of the episcopal synod listen to Eusebius attentively. The congregation sits spellbound.)* Oh, what a terrible destiny awaits the empire! It has already begun:

the last hour is here! Imagine: not to know where you are going, what comes after you: not even to know what you want, except to plunge the sword first, to be the killer instead of the victim. Fear, fear everywhere! Fear of life and love, fear of power and death. See: the whole empire tosses violently like a huge, diseased animal clawing the earth that is about to devour it. (*Eusebius pauses and continues almost to himself, softly.*) And in the midst of this decay, death and universal terror came the light of our great teaching, whose mission and eternal glory it is to save the world, to redeem mankind. Out of the whirlpool of hatred, oppression and violence our church arose like a miracle to teach supreme love of God and love for our fellow men. And in this enormous night of denial and despair, ours is the one affirming voice. We cry to all men: love one another or die! Yes, beloved brothers and sisters: love alone can save us from the frightful consequences of our egotism: true love of God is expressed in service to our fellow men: the divine attributes are in every one of us: as God forgives us, so we must forgive one another: and not at special times or sacred holidays alone, or on high occasions of every kind, but day after day, in every act, at every moment of our lives! (*Eusebius looks around, bewildered by the immense silence which billows through the basilica. Now he goes on quietly, in a barely audible voice.*) This was the idea I have been trying to impress on all who would listen. I wanted to say that when we truly recognize that all men are equal not in capacity but in value, then we may begin to find the way to render all men happy in a wise and just world. . . .

(*Eusebius stops, looks around again, seems about to go on, changes his mind. Then the congregation awakes as from a trance and begins to applaud. Polyclitus leaps to his feet, holds up his hand. The applause dies abruptly.*)

BASIL (*popping up behind the bishop*): Who applauded?

POLYCLITUS (*sternly*): This is not a circus! And one does not applaud heretics! You see now how dangerous Eusebius is: you have yourselves been seduced by his rhetoric. But what has he said? Only what every catechumen, every child knows. He has given you the alphabet of the Great Answer. But that is not enough! What he said every heretic proclaims! Do not these reptiles also assert that the old world is dying, that the new faith will triumph? What is the difference between us and them? Why—precisely in those things which Eusebius fancies are unimportant! In theology, which he despises; in organization, which he condemns; in hierarchy, which he belittles; in obedience, which he violates!

BASIL (*from the rear*): Yes, and in the personality of the hierarchs!

AMBROSE: The whole church and all its teaching stands or falls with its leaders.

POLYCLITUS: We have two great sayings among us which have the force of decrees: *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*: outside the church there is no salvation; and *nulla ecclesia sine episcopo*: there is no church without the bishop! Eusebius fails to grasp the meaning of these decrees: or worse, he understands their meaning and resists them. Let us make it clear once and for all: you cannot have salvation without a church, a church without organization, organization without hierarchy, hierarchy without authority, authority without leadership, leadership without obedience, obedience without faith! And I might add that you cannot have faith without complete renunciation of those egotistical, rebellious faculties which arrogate to themselves the name of reason!

EUSEBIUS: But, dearly beloved father, of what am I guilty?

POLYCLITUS: You are guilty of making false and deadly distinctions, of splitting the splendid unity of our life, of setting the basic teaching above the hierarchy, of preferring the spirit of the church to its head. Such distinctions are wrong: they are vile beyond words!

AMBROSE: They are heretical!

BASIL: Criminal!

EUSEBIUS: True, I emphasized the essential teaching of our faith, but I did not mean to belittle anything else.

BASIL: You stood by unresisting while Judge Titus, a rotten pagan, said the most insulting things about our hierarchy. In failing to refute him, you seemed to agree with him. I know: I was there taking notes!

AMBROSE: He did not refute what Judge Titus said about our hierarchs? Then Eusebius must be guilty indeed; for he who does not defend the True Faith at every single point must harbor doubt of some kind in his heart.

POLYCLITUS: Speak up, Eusebius! In your heart of hearts, you have doubted, haven't you?

EUSEBIUS: I have never doubted the essential teaching.

POLYCLITUS (*very angry*): But you have doubted something! A single decree, a single statute, perhaps a single hierarch? Answer me! (*There is a painful silence as Eusebius looks clearly into the bishop's eyes.*) Speak, Eusebius! Tell the truth before God and this synod of your episcopal superiors! You have doubted something, have you not?

EUSEBIUS (*softly, earnestly*): He who has never doubted has never really believed.

POLYCLITUS (*turning to the congregation*): There, there! You

see, beloved brothers and sisters! He is not only guilty of the monstrous sin of doubt; he even dares to erect it into a principle! He defends his crime with the deadly wiles of logic! (*The bishop, now magnificent in his righteous rage, lifts his eyes and hands to heaven and cries out in a loud voice.*) O miserable Aristotle, who taught the heretics logic, the shameless art of building up and pulling down, harsh in its conjectures, in its arguments productive of squabbling, embarrassing even to itself, treating of everything a second time, lest it should ever be settled once and for all. Away, I say! Away with all these attempts to produce a motley faith of the dregs of old ideas! (*The bishop's voice halts on this lofty note. Silence weighs down the tense excitement of the overcrowded basilica. The bishop lowers his voice to a normal tone and speaks severely.*) And now, Eusebius, tell us truthfully: what have you doubted?

EUSEBIUS: When Judge Titus spoke of the corruption of our church, I suddenly thought of Zephyrinus in the century preceding ours: an unlearned man, ignorant of the language and definitions of the church: avaricious, venal, of unsettled principles: a man zigzagging like a drunkard among adverse conflicting tenets: embracing now one, now the other with all the zeal of an irresolute mind. Yet this man was pope.

POLYCLITUS: You dared think that?

EUSEBIUS: Worse than that, father. I thought of his successor Callistus—

POLYCLITUS: Enough! Enough! You have been reading *The Refutation of All Heresies*, and it has been too much for your feeble brain and irresolute faith. It is not for you to judge the leaders of our church, whatever mistakes they may commit.

EUSEBIUS: You are absolutely right, father. I thought of Callistus and said to myself: it is not for you to judge the leaders of your church. But this raised another terrible doubt. If I have no right to judge my leaders, then has not hierarchy and inequality crept into the Kingdom of Equals, into the brotherhood founded by our Master?

POLYCLITUS: No more terrible doubt could have infected your heart!

EUSEBIUS: True, father: but I grappled with that doubt also and with heaven's help overcame it.

POLYCLITUS: How did you overcome it?

EUSEBIUS: I said to myself: remember the difficult trials and tribulations of our church and the greatness of the men who are leading it to victory. A Bishop of Rome may now and then be a scoundrel: the bishop of Rome, whoever he may be, is always a hero. Surrounded by the vicious, hostile pagan world, he stands out as the

one man in the empire on whose shoulders rests the terrible burden of leading the new faith to ultimate triumph the world over. The vulgar consider him merely a member of one of those countless Eastern religions which, from the commencement of the empire, have been flowing into Rome, each with its strange rites and mysteries. Whom do the vulgar respect? The emperor, the imperial family, the court favorites, the military commanders, the senators, the patricians by birth, wealth or favor, the pagan pontiffs, priests and lawyers—yes, even the gladiators, mimes, dancers and actors. All, all receive greater homage in the public streets than our Master's representative on earth, than the head of the faith destined to save mankind. Our bishop receives public attention only when he is persecuted. But look, O beloved brothers and sisters! Is there not real greatness and solemn testimony to the faith in Christ in this calm and steadfast patience of our bishop which awaits the tardy accomplishment of the divine promise? What a burden rests upon his shoulders! Aware that he is the chief minister in the world's capital of a creed which confronts paganism in all its power and majesty, our shepherd looks forward, under the most trying circumstances, to the time when this vast fabric of idolatry in its strength and wealth, hallowed by the veneration of ages, with all its temples, pomps, theaters, priesthoods; its superstitions and crimes; and besides this all the wisdom of the philosophic aristocracy will crumble away; and the successor of the Galilean Fisherman will be recognized as the spiritual sovereign of the world. I thought this, father, and my doubt vanished.

(Behind Eusebius, on one of the benches, we see a close-up of a boy and girl whispering. They first appeared in the class for catechumens.)

MARCUS: Poor Eusebius is certainly sticking his neck out.

CORNELIA: Who would have dreamed he could harbor such terrible doubts?

MARCUS: The real question is: why does he confess them?

CORNELIA: Aren't we all obliged to confess?

MARCUS: Yes, within limits. Do you tell everything in your confession? *(With mock horror.)* Good heavens, Cornelia, I hope not!

CORNELIA *(smiling)*: You shouldn't talk that way, Marcus. Ever since you've begun studying medicine your mind is full of the queerest ideas.

MARCUS: Well, here's another queer one for you. I suspect this heresy trial was prearranged in advance to impress us. What will you bet they release Eusebius in the end?

CORNELIA: You're wrong, Marcus: it's all terribly real.

POLYCLITUS (*with overpowering gravity*): You have confessed some frightful doubts, Eusebius.

EUSEBIUS: Yes, father, I confess gladly. Confession is good for the soul. I know heaven will absolve and future generations forgive me because, for all my sins and doubts, I am on the true side in the greatest conflict in all man's history upon this earth, because I have never served the pagan empire or the devil's brood of heretics. Then again: to confess is to repent. Only that which is secret can be evil: any thought or act which is stripped bare to the world, from which the dark veils of insidious reticence have been unrolled, anything which is bathed in the pure glamour of day, becomes beautifully clean. Evil dies in the light, the good blooms. So now, having revealed my secret doubts, I already feel cleaner and better: I am purged of the feeling of guilt: I am again at one with my congregation.

POLYCLITUS: You have done well to speak frankly, my son. Your confession helps to clarify everything, especially since you have held nothing back.

EUSEBIUS (*frightened by his own thought*): Wait, father! Forgive me: I have not told you everything.

POLYCLITUS (*severely*): What have you concealed?

EUSEBIUS: I have just remembered another doubt.

POLYCLITUS: Out with it!

EUSEBIUS: In the worst moments of despair, when I wondered whether we shall really succeed in liberating mankind, in shaping a future better than the past, in those black moments I at least believed in the essence of our faith: I was certain that all men are equal not in capacity but in value. But there came a terrible moment when I doubted even that.

POLYCLITUS: When?

EUSEBIUS: When Basil ordered me to appear before this holy synod to be tried on heresy charges. For see how it was, father: I was certain of my faith and innocence, certain of the goodness and wisdom of my superiors; yes, I freely and gladly acknowledged they are far above me in capacity. But I thought, in the Kingdom our original idea still prevailed, that we are equal in value as human beings. But here, out of a clear sky, an astonished thunderbolt struck me: something secret had been undertaken against me: I could not understand it: someone had been able to destroy the whole meaning of my life, to endow me with a character I have never had and never wanted. And this mysterious person was so influential that his very assertion transformed me: he uttered a lie and his power made that lie come true. I had never doubted the essence of our faith: he accused me of heresy and lo! I did doubt.

POLYCLITUS: And how did you doubt this time?

EUSEBIUS: Don't you see, father? That great lie caused me to commit a great sin. If, I said to myself, it is possible for some unknown man inside our church arbitrarily to alter my life to this extent, to call me a heretic when I am not, to make me a heretic when I do not want to be: if someone in our fold has this, the most tremendous power in the world, the power to transform a man's whole life—then how is it possible to believe that all men are equal in value? Yes, among us, too, men are totally unequal; and perhaps they are unequal in value because unequal in capacity. Perhaps Judge Titus was right even in this, the most essential, the most sacred, the most vital core of the new faith. This, dearly beloved father, was the terrible doubt which assailed me. I lay awake all night, weeping bitterly, disconsolate and despairing that I should doubt and that my doubt should appear valid.

POLYCLITUS: Then you repudiate everything about us!

EUSEBIUS: No, no, father! This morning, struggling with my soul, I overcame this terrible doubt also. I am more certain than ever that our faith must win; that it is the real and sole road to salvation for all men. For even if we are unequal in value today, we preach the gospel of equality in the Kingdom: across thousands of years this faith will be taught to the generations which come into the world and pass out of it and each of these will transmit this great truth to its successors: and by teaching that all men are equal in value, even when they are not yet so, we shall kindle a great desire in the hearts of men: we shall show them the luminous star of the highest good: we shall make them determine to render what *should* be into what *is*: we shall inspire them and habituate them to make men equal not only in value but also in capacity. So I came here, father, healed in spirit, free of doubt, ready to accept my church and all that is in it with a full, unreserved soul, to work as always in the way of truth and obedience. Forgive me, dearly beloved father, and let me remain in the fold.

(The congregation appears to be rather moved by the plea of Eusebius. Even the eyes of Polyclitus reveal little lights of mercy. Basil, however, looks furious and keeps frowning significantly to Ambrose. The bishop catches sight of that relentless frown.)

POLYCLITUS: Eusebius, you say you are healed in spirit, free of doubt. But you are still talking about your private interpretations of equality! You completely ignore the real issue involved here. You minimize the role of the hierarchy, and that sin you have not publicly repented. You do not begin to understand the importance of authority, the moral power of command, supported when necessary by physical coercion. I have no hope of making your sinful heart

grasp its importance; but there is no better occasion than this for making others see it who are better disposed than you. (*He addresses the attentive congregation.*) Man cannot live without authority. It is natural for him to live in organized society, and where there is organized society there must be authority. Otherwise we have anarchy, the disruption of society. No man loves isolation, solitude, loneliness: that is why all men fear excommunication worse than death: it cuts them off from society and throws them into solitude. But if you wish to live in society, if you wish to avoid loneliness, you must accept authority and submit to it. You may dislike the particular authority under which you live, but you must accept even that rather than face anarchy or isolation. What is the rebel, the heretic, the schismatic, the malcontent of every kind? He is no better than anyone else, though he pretends to be: he is simply a man who aims at a change in government so as to get authority into his own hands: he merely wants to rule those who now rule him. I repeat: it is natural for man to live in society, to submit to authority, to be governed by that custom of society which crystallizes into law. And if this is true of all societies, how much more true of ours? Remember the words of St. Paul: let every soul be subject unto the higher powers: whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation: for rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil: wilt thou then not be afraid of the power: do that which is good and thou shalt have praise of the same: but if thou do that which is evil, be afraid: for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil: wherefore ye must needs be subject not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake: render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor. . . .

EUSEBIUS (*kneeling*): You speak sacred truth, father. My heart fully, freely and gladly accepts these teachings.

POLYCLITUS: I understand your feelings, my son. You seek to follow another of St. Paul's sayings: for I wished myself to be an anathema from Christ for my brethren who are my kinsmen according to the flesh: I should wish to be separated and rejected of Christ if by that means I would procure the salvation of my brethren.

BASIL (*rising in rage*): Are we going to let that apostate get away? Can we have authority and permit it to be flouted? (*Turns to the congregation.*) Look at Eusebius! a man more grim than a Scythian, more restless than a wagon driver, more ruthless than a Massaget, more impudent than an Amazon, darker than a cloud,

chiller than winter, more brittle than ice, more treacherous than the Danube, craggier than the Caucasus! (*Everybody realizes Eusebius is nothing of the kind; nobody moves to halt this flow of imaginative vituperation borrowed from Tertullian.*) Nay, more! by him the True Faith is mangled with blasphemies: he is even more intolerable than the wild beasts: for what beaver ever practiced worst castration than this foul heretic? What Pontic mouse is a worse nibbler than he who has gnawed at the Gospels? That whelping Diogenes tried to find a man, carrying round his lamp in broad daylight: but Eusebius, having quenched the light of faith, has lost the Deity he had found!

(*Eusebius, kneeling below the altar, raises his tear-streaked face to heaven: he believes God is going to help him in this most awful hour of his life.*)

POLYCLITUS (*looking down upon Eusebius with pale, expressionless eyes*): Yes, my son: I'm afraid it's too late. You are in grievous error: You entered the church by taking a vow. The essence of a vow comprises two things: the matter that is vowed and the sacrifice of the will. The former may be commuted to another matter of greater value, though not on the individual's own responsibility: it can be done only by the authority of the church. But the sacrifice of the will can never be commuted. When you entered the church, you submitted your will to the hierarchy. To question that is heresy of the grossest kind.

EUSEBIUS (*weeping softly*): No, no, father! I do not question it.

POLYCLITUS: The evidence is against you, and we have the catechumens to consider. (*Solemnly cites Scripture as his final decision.*) If anyone preach to you a gospel besides that which you received, let him be anathema: and if he will not hear the church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican.

EUSEBIUS (*softly, with the expiring breath of hope*): Forgive me, father . . .

POLYCLITUS (*rising with all the majesty of a supreme magistrate*): Eusebius, I am now going to pronounce against you the mortal ban, which is like the expulsion of Adam from paradise. You will be excluded from the church and all churches: you will be declared an outlaw from society: you will be completely cut off from all association, all intercourse with others, even in purely human affairs, in the simplest details of everyday life. The faithful must utterly disown you: they must shun your company as if you were afflicted with the most terrible of contagious diseases, as indeed you are, for a bad example like yours is dangerously contagious. We must make everyone aware how grave is your transgression, how stern the punishment. Your isolation must be complete. *Si pro delictis*

anathema quis efficiatur: os, orare, vale, communio, mensa negatur! The faithful are hereby forbidden to communicate with you publicly or privately, by word of mouth or in writing: they must deny you all external marks of friendship and honor: they must have no business or social dealings with you of any kind whatever: if your parents are alive, if you have any brothers and sisters, they must avoid your presence: if they see you by accident, they must act as if you are dead and beyond redemption.

(Awed silence fills the entire basilica. Polyclitus raises his hand; the acolytes approach; they help the bishop into amice, stole, violet cape and miter. Twelve priests come up clad in surplices, bearing lighted candles which flicker in the dusk of the cathedral. The crowd rises reverently. Polyclitus takes his seat in front of the altar, lifts his lighted candle aloft. Looking down intently upon the kneeling Eusebius, he pronounces in a loud, terrible voice the majestic strophes of the anathema.)

POLYCLITUS: . . . Wherefore, in the name of God the All-Powerful Father, Son and Holy Ghost; of the Blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles; and of all the Saints; in virtue of the power which has been given us of binding and loosing in Heaven and on earth, we deprive Eusebius himself and all his accomplices and all his abettors of the Communion of the Body and Blood of our Lord: we separate him from the society of all Christians: we exclude him from the bosom of our Holy Mother the Church in Heaven and on earth: we declare him excommunicated and anathematized, and we judge him condemned to eternal fire with Satan and his angels and all the reprobate, so long as he will not burst the fetters of the demon, do penance and satisfy the Church: we deliver him to Satan to mortify his body, that his soul may be saved on the day of judgment.

CHORUS *(of twelve priests, acolytes and choir)*: Fiat! Fiat! Fiat!

(During this scene, close-ups of the congregation show faces awed and reverent with the sublime and terrible exclusion of a fellow believer. The student Marcus wipes perspiration from his forehead. Cornelia is crying. Eusebius kneels motionless, his head sunk on his breast. And now Bishop Polyclitus and the twelve priests cast their lighted candles to the ground and there is an acute hush of expectation.)

POLYCLITUS *(turning to his amanuensis)*: Basil, you will send notices to all bishops and priests the world over notifying that Eusebius has been excommunicated for heresy. *(Faces the congregation, speaks in a loud, authoritative voice.)* He who dares despise our decision, let him be stricken with anathema maranatha! May he be damned at the coming of the Lord! May he have his place with Judas Iscariot and his companions! Amen. . . .

CONGREGATION : Amen!

EUSEBIUS (*murmuring*) : Forgive them, Heavenly Father, and have mercy on my soul.

(Everybody starts to leave. Soon the basilica is deserted except for Eusebius, who continues to kneel in the gathering dusk and silence. Now, all alone, he raises his eyes to the altar and prays.)

EUSEBIUS : Heavenly Father! Forgive my sins: forgive those who have condemned me unjustly: fill their hearts and mine with wisdom, justice and love: guide me back to the one true fold and the glory of Thy eternal grace: help men understand and cherish each other in the light of thy all-embracing love: cleanse my soul of bitterness: suffuse it with hope: bring salvation to this unhappy world: light the sun of truth across our dark horizons: and in the desert where I shall now dwell as an anchorite, do not abandon me, O God! but let me love Thee and mankind with perfect love! Amen. . . .

(He rises, walks slowly to the door of the church. The night is bright with vast stars; a soft wind blows through the trees.)

EUSEBIUS (*looking at the stars and speaking to himself with naïve, stubborn conviction*) : But it's true! It *must* be true! It cannot be otherwise! All men *are* equal not in capacity but in value. . . .

4

Goodbye, brothers! You were a good crowd: as good a crowd as ever fisted with wild cries the beating canvas of a heavy foresail; or tossing aloft, invisible in the night, gave back yell for yell to a westerly gale.

—Joseph Conrad.

THE VISION BEGAN TO FADE. I sat up in darkness and listened with beating heart to the harmonies of *Prelude, Chorale and Fugue* dissolving faintly in receding distance. Deep shadows broke under a flash of light; the music rose higher and higher with increasing tension and halted abruptly; the light became unendurably bright, charged with the need of saying something more across the immeasurable sea of time billowing through endless luminous horizons. At last the image exploded silently; everything visionary disappeared; I became fully aware of my own identity in the real world whose very existence surprised me with terror.

Startled, I sat up in bed and looked around my room in the Swiss hotel. The windows came alive with the subdued light of emerging skies; the rain had stopped; the remote mountain rose clearly through dawn's first hour. I heard the clock, listened cautiously to the beating of time's heart and shuddered at the thought that I had just had another vision. In the concentration camp everyone and everything had been abnormal; dreams and visions seemed part of the general phantasmagoria; but now and here to see things which had no real existence was another matter. I felt sick, confused, and my soul sank into that darkness where no man beholds his fellow and the gods crouch like frightened dogs. All the resistance of my being cried out in silence: it is not so, it was not so, and God forbid it should be so! Then remembering suddenly, remembering everything as a drowning man remembers, and forgetting everything at once under the sea of engulfing reverie, my soul saw neither sun nor moon but heard the roaring of the sea recoiling before terrors of the visible world as far-off echoes of the passing-bell tolled ominously above ambiguous tombs. Despair continuously rose from graves of

cowardice, mistrust and guilt : ghosts of my dead lives hovered over unearthly chasms filled with ephemeral music of foreboding, and the gusty morning moaned over savage places whose sepulchral gibbets knew no human sound.

Oh, hold tight to this real morning of the village, this acute moment of time here and now ! Escape this unwanted renaissance of wonder, fear and pity which stands aghast in shrouds of vision before insoluble riddles masquerading as the past !

It was hopeless. My heart was thrall to its own ache : the mind, falling into that abyss of phosphorescent light, wandered forlorn in resurrected Gothic caverns of dejection, seeking some Ariadne to lead it out of this dilettante nightmare wherein the dead, dancing along hills of delirious imagery, lose their power of deceiving us.

There was a knock on the door, and I heard the hotel manager call my name. I did not answer because I could not. I felt I had died and would never again be able to move among the living. The knocking became louder.

"Professor Schuman !" the manager cried. "You asked to be called at five o'clock. It's after five now !"

Still I could not answer ; all my faculties were paralyzed.

"You have a plane to make !" the manager persisted. "Open the door !"

"I can't."

"Are you ill ?"

"No."

"Why don't you open the door ?"

"I can't."

"You must !"

"I tell you I can't !"

Was that my voice shouting in a tension which my brain refused to recognize as its own ?

"Is there something the matter with the door ?" the manager said. "I'll open it in a minute."

"Never mind," I said. "I'll take care of it myself, thank you."

"Well, well, well," the manager's voice repeated with relief and indignation. "What will you have for breakfast ?"

"Anything at all. I don't want any breakfast."

"I'll make you some coffee," said the manager.

I could hear his shoes shuffle away from the door. Shaving, bathing and dressing, I did everything with the greatest difficulty, and when I tried to recall the vision I had seen during the night it was absolutely impossible. Suppose I could recall it, what good would that do ? Our intellect is compelled by its very nature to unify,

integrate and give meaning to everything we perceive or think, including dreams and visions; but if special circumstances, such as the phobias which catastrophe had induced in me, prevents us from grasping the real meaning of thought, dream or vision, our fantasy does not hesitate to construct a false one. And yet, hard as I tried to create even a false interpretation of my vision, I failed every time. I could not recall any of the details; there was nothing to go on except trails of fear the vision had left in its wake; and so strong was this psychic reality now that I suddenly found myself unable to leave my quarters.

There I stood, fully dressed, ready to take the plane for England which Hague had chartered, yet unable to get out. I fumbled with the doorknob, felt the sweat rolling down the back of my neck and my heart pounding through a void of terror and I could not face the world. Obsessional ideas chained me: you must not leave this place: you must not see anyone: you must not do anything: if you move, something terrible will happen: you are dead: you can't move: you can't, you can't!

"Paul?"

Like magic Anon's voice came unexpectedly through the door, dissolving chains of obsession, and my true self emerged from the cave of despair ready to face the world.

When I opened the door, Anon was standing in the corridor smiling.

"Come have your coffee," she said, "or you'll miss the plane."

Thirty minutes later I made the plane in plenty of time.

At Lisbon I had to wait three days because of a British ruling about special signals, and this kept me in a fantastic part of the world. Private and government planes of two nations at war reposed peacefully side by side in the airport. British and Nazi pilots exchanged pleasantries and cigarettes, admired each other's machines. On this neutral ground, the Lufthansa's swastika smiled to British Imperial Airways.

At last I was allowed to board an old four-motor Handley-Paige with a machine-gun nest, and high above the clouds we crossed invisible waters to a nameless spot in England. From there I took a train to London where I registered at the hotel Hague had selected in advance. He was already there, packed and waiting, with plenty of Scotch and cigarettes to hold us until we were called for.

At midnight there was a knock on the door and a young couple came in. The girl looked so much like Peggy that my heart stood still. What made this unexpected meeting even more startling was

that the girl was my sister-in-law. The young man in uniform was her husband, Captain Wilfrid Merivale of the RAF. He told us we had half an hour, so Hague asked the young people to sit down and gave them drinks and I had a chance to look at Elaine.

I had not seen her since that wedding day in Vienna long ago when she had come with her parents from London to be Peggy's bridesmaid. She was only fifteen then, and I hardly noticed her. Later my wife and I received some letters from her, but she remained for me a vague, unreal figure, a relative by marriage lost in another land and separated from us by those barriers which rise between the generations in a swiftly changing world. After Peggy's death in Andalusia, I scarcely ever heard from Elaine. For all practical purposes she had never existed in my life. Here, in this London midnight, she existed very much. I was impressed by the youth, loveliness and candor of her face with its clear fragile skin and wide gray eyes, and by the air-raid warden's uniform she wore; and was glad Hague had arranged for her and Captain Merivale to come.

It was wonderful to be in England even when April and peace were not there; and it was sad to realize this dream without Peggy. We would never take those trips around London we used to plan, but it was good to be here in Peggy's country even for a brief hour, and it was good to meet Elaine and Captain Merivale even in fleeting recognition.

As the precious moments rushed by, I asked questions and Elaine told me about herself and thereby about the new woman who had come into the world while I had been lost in the Nazi concentration camp. You have no idea how astonishing it all appeared to me, doctor, in that place and at that hour of vast combat surrounding us. Generations of women from the New Héloïse to my mother's friends had struggled for the right to love; Peggy's generation had won the right to work; and now Elaine's had achieved the right to defend its country. Elaine told of women in the army, navy and air force, ferrying airplanes, operating anti-aircraft guns, working in hospitals and managing theaters: growing food on England's farms, spotting incendiary bombs on its roofs, patrolling the street in black-outs, porting baggage on railways, collecting bus fares, running all-night canteens, driving ambulances through the hell-fire of battle, making dangerous explosives in munition plants: truly the equals and companions of men, yet all the while loving their nearest and dearest: being good sweethearts, wives and mothers: demanding and getting day nurseries for their children: breaking the chains of a dark long past: emerging at last as persons fighting for all that was vital to their country's liberty and close to their own hearts.

Elaine told all this casually, as a matter of course, as nothing to be surprised at; and that in itself was a miracle, that this profound transformation in human values and conduct, emerging out of the flames of a righteous war, should be taken for granted by a young generation forgetting the crippled past.

Captain Wilfrid Merivale of the RAF was an equally surprising person. He, too, was young and candid in spite of the terrible ordeals through which he had passed in battle. He had the good taste to ask no questions about the concentration camp whose shadow still hovered over my memory but did ask me about my work at the university. Then, out of the blue, he astonished me by saying:

"Professor Schuman, may I tell you how much I liked your book *From Augustus to Augustine*?"

"When did you read it?" I said awkwardly.

"Last year, when I was on leave."

"Lucky for you, Paul, he can read your barbarous language," said Hague, who seemed very pleased with this whole episode.

"Really, it's a splendid book," said Captain Merivale.

My vanity had no time to be flattered: I was too engrossed in the revelation that during a war like this a young soldier should take time out to read a dusty tome on the early Middle ages by an obscure Viennese scholar.

"You are very kind, captain," I said.

"I'm interested in history," he said.

"Are you a historian?"

"No; a biochemist. But nowadays everybody reads everything. When this show is over, we've got to unify all fields of knowledge, don't you think?"

"You seem hopeful about the future," I said.

"Aren't you, sir? Have you read the statement Professor Laski gave out?"

"I'm afraid I haven't followed the papers carefully."

"Terribly sorry. He said the people of England want to terminate a system in which the many are slaves of the few, which makes ordinary men and women not ends in themselves but means to the ends of others. He said we seek in this war, after victory, not a return to the old world, but quite precisely the building of a new world. It's a people's war: why not a people's peace?"

Like his wife, young Captain Merivale said these things as a matter of course, as nothing to be surprised at; and the dream I had encountered in my youth on the Continent now reappeared in an English blackout in the form of an RAF ace who accepted as simple and clear what had once appeared strange and impossible; and that was exactly the miracle of it.

"You seem cheerful sociologically," I said. "How do things look to you biochemically?"

"Oh, they look all right," he said. "After all, there has been life on this earth for twelve hundred million years but human life for only a million."

Captain Merivale stopped and looked at me curiously.

"Professor Schuman is startled," said Hague, with a mischievous twinkle in his eye. "You've just touched on one of his pet themes, captain."

"Don't be so serious, Wilfrid," Elaine said to her husband.

"Please go on," I said. "I'm terribly interested."

So I was. I had heard and said those things for two decades, but they seemed more actual in these surroundings at this moment. I felt, perhaps because I profoundly wished to feel, that a war which involves the entire human race must inexorably give some real shape to old dreams.

"All I meant to say," Captain Merivale went on, "is that only during a very tiny fraction of these million years have human beings been able to think at all. Our minds are really very recent products, imperfect, makeshift, transitional, and it's very likely that someday we shall have minds as superior to our present thinking-organs as these are superior to the amoeba's."

I could not help smiling with pleasure. This young flyer's generation had taken out of the hands of my own the undying torch of knowledge and hope, and it seemed that when the combatants of right could think this way about the morrow after victory and the long encouraging future of man, the great ordeal had every opportunity to issue in some tangible good for mankind.

As Captain Merivale looked at his wrist watch and said it was time to go, Elaine opened her bag and took out a pocket edition of a book bound in red morocco.

"Would you do me a favor, Professor Schuman?" she said.

"If I can."

"This is Peggy's school copy of *Paradise Lost* with marginal notes in her hand. Won't you please accept it as a memento from us?"

"And our England," Captain Merivale added smiling.

I opened the book to the flyleaf, and there in Peggy's beloved script was a fragment of the democratic dream struck off by the luminous hand of her favorite among England's romantic poets, a fragment whose love of freedom filled that strange moment with hope: I dreamed that Milton's spirit rose, and took from life's green tree his Uranian lute: and from his touch sweet thunder flowed, and shook all human things built in contempt of man.

Under this Peggy had added a line from Milton himself: but man over men He made not lord: such title to himself reserving, human left from human free.

At two o'clock in the morning we left the hotel and stepped into a waiting car. Captain Merivale took the wheel and drove us through a total blackout somewhere to a camouflaged airfield in the country; there, after bidding Elaine and the young RAF officer good-bye, Hague and I stepped into the Hudson bomber of the Ferry Command which was to take us across the Atlantic.

Our fellow passengers were American army officers, pilots of the Ferry Command and two British officers. The only seat in the plane was occupied by the pilot of the ship. The rest of us had to sit on gasoline tanks and parachutes covered with blankets.

From the bomber earth and sea were invisible. There was nothing but sky. We were sailing swiftly through an immense clarity of space incredibly high and remote, and no dream of flight, awake or sleeping, could foresense this sublime reality of night above the clouds.

Exhausted by weeks of energetic action in London, Hague promptly went to sleep. The other passengers followed his example, accustomed to this transatlantic flight so new and marvelous to me.

I remained awake, trying to believe I was really flying across the sea, away, perhaps forever, from the Europe which until now had been my whole life and toward a vast unknown America alluring with promises and enigmas of an existence about to be born. I dozed off and woke and dozed off again; and through mists of half-awareness, the twentieth century motors of the enormous metal bird seemed to be saying farewell to the continent below; not to seas and hills and cities now being rent asunder with battles of supreme destiny, but to a recorded past weighing too long and heavily upon me. And under veils of light sleep, high there in remote vaults upon the very rims of heaven, my dormant brain seemed to wake for a secret valedictory to old things, as if the century suddenly realized that when it was a child it spoke as a child, and when it became a man it put away childish things.

And so farewell to the dissolving list of epic men: farewell, Agamemnon and Alexander, there are brave men after you: farewell, Alva and Augustus, Bourbon, Bismarck and Caesar: so long, you capricious Capetians and Medicis, you marvelous and mad Carolingians and Merovingians: adieu, Plantagenets and Tudors, Clovis and Constantine: vale Diocletian and Prince Eugene: adieu, all you Francis and Fredericks, Gregorys and Haakons, Hapsburgs and Hanovers, Henrys and Innocents: rest undisturbed through all eter-

nity in the cavern of forgotten things, O all you Ivans and Jameses, Leos and Leopolds, Lothairs and Louises, Loyolas and Luthers, Machiavellis, Marlboroughs, Marys and Maximilians: get out and stay out, all you Napoleons and Nicolais, Olafs and Olgas, Pepins and Peters, Richards and Richelieus, Romanoffs and Ruprechts, Rudolphs and Ruriks, Stephens and Stuarts: and here's an everlasting end to all you princes named Wenceslas and Wilhelm: your lives are outlived, your work outdone, your world is dead beyond recall, passed and surpassed beyond the wildest dreams of bard and prophet.

And now, through the steady rumble of motors against the sky, through a throbbing brain that lurches forward toward new lands across waves of cloud, a list persists that will not die, an index that is a poem, names beating out a rhythm of fruitful seed so deeply planted in the hearts of men that golden fruit still leaps from them to light. Okay, Abélard, Aristotle, Bach, Balzac, Beethoven! Righto, Boccaccio, Buffon, Cervantes! We need you! You, too, Chaucer, Cicero, Corneille, Cromwell, Dante, Demosthenes! Wait, Descartes, Dickens and Diderot, Eckhart, Erasmus, Fourier, Francis of Assisi! Men wanted: jobs open! You there, Galen, Galileo and Glueck, come along! And that celestial spirit Goethe: and Handel, Harvey, Haydn, Homer and Horace: Kant and Lavoisier, Leibnitz and the divine Leonardo: Linnaeus and Locke: Matthias Gruenewald and Michelangelo! Welcome, Milton, Molière and Marx: Montaigne and Mozart: Newton and Owen! How dreams survive agonies! How everlasting is the good! Stand by, Palestrina and Petrarch; Pindar, Plautus and Plato: Polybius and Priestly! Have a drink, Rabelais, we're with you! It's on the house, Racine and Raphael! Bottoms up, Rembrandt, Ronsard, Rousseau, Reubens! Hello, Saint-Simon! How are you, Spinoza and Schiller! Meet everybody! Hat's off: here's the bard of Avon, master of us all! Orchids and plenty of them for Socrates, Tasso, Aquinas, Valésquez, Villon: Virgil, Voltaire and old Walt himself! What a day! What a life! See the others too numerous to mention taking out first papers in the Federal Building, making themselves at home in the land of the free, transcending grossness and slag, always with us, inspiring man's endless quest for seeds of perfection.

Altitude and reverie increased elation; but when I opened my eyes and peered through the glass there was nothing but shapeless night around our ship of heaven nosing steadily toward American clouds far away. And suddenly I remembered not the recorded past or inconclusive future but the acute present heavy with the terror and courage of unresolved conflict; and I thought of the conquered lands behind me and the vast prison of peoples to be liberated.

It was late; I was tired and depressed; and when I finally man-

aged to fall into a profound sleep I dreamed of the concentration camp and once more beheld the scaffold in the courtyard and the arrogant eyes of the Nazi inspector; and as I knelt at the execution block, the drums of the death's-head guards rolled relentlessly through space the ominous warnings of the year over the heads of my fellow prisoners.

5

*Long, too long America,
Traveling roads all even and peaceful you learned
from joys and prosperity only,
But now, ah now, to learn from crises of anguish,
advancing, grappling with direst fate and re-
coiling not.*

—Walt Whitman.

SETTING FOOT on a Long Island airfield was my first American act; for what is more traditionally American than the arrival of the exile and immigrant? What is the meaning of that long majestic procession from the Pilgrim Fathers to this new influx of men and women seeking refuge from tyranny except that America will forever live in the memory of generations as the haven of the world's free hearts? Heaven bless that immortal cliché which America alone has created, on which it was founded, by which it grew to wealth and power: the asylum of the oppressed of all nations.

As we stepped out of the bomber, Hague was besieged by reporters and cameramen; questions popped, bulbs flashed; my friend made some pithy comments on the European war and the need for American aid to Britain, and for the first time I saw directly what a person of real consequence was this old schoolmate of mine with whom I used to argue the nature of things in Paris bistros in another eon.

And now through the crowd there came a tall, beautiful, well-dressed woman who embraced Hague. I was introduced to Mrs. Hague; the cameramen took shots of the three of us, and we went across the airfield into the street. Hague's limousine waited for us there. We slid into luxurious upholstery. A handsome Negro chauffeur stepped on the gas and we rolled across Queensboro Bridge into Manhattan.

It was an overwhelming sight. For three years I had not seen a great metropolis, and neither Paris nor Vienna had the majestic power of this one whose steel and concrete towers touched the sky.

Hague's home was in the East Sixties. In Europe we would have called it a palace, though no princely dwelling in Vienna had the

efficient, up-to-the-minute equipment of this one. Yet the spirit of Europe was here, too, in the heavy tapestries which covered the walls of the immense living room; in the sturdy oak chairs and long tables of Tudor design; in the original Rembrandts, Cézannes and Pous-sins hanging in the library.

The Hagues were extremely kind.

"I want you to stay with us as long as you like," Hague said. "Consider this your home."

I wanted to stay; but feeling the way I did, afraid above all of my secret obsessive ideas, I thought it would be better to live alone somewhere, to try to find myself again.

"Thank you, Russell," I said. "Let me stay here a few days, then I'd like to look around for a room."

"Suit yourself," Hague said. "If there's anything you want, ask for it. This is your home and the longer you stay the better we'll like it."

I spent a pleasant week with the Hagues. Beatrice was a wonderful woman; their two-year-old child, blue-eyed, golden-haired Judy, was sheer delight. Every afternoon I would saunter down Fifth Avenue, looking at the crowds and buildings, peering into shop windows, trying to feel my way in this land of boundless possibilities. Evenings I would spend at home with the Hagues and various friends who called on them.

It was all simple enough for an American and nobody saw anything unusual; but I tasted for the first time in years something wonderful which Europe had forgotten and which at best it had never known to this extent.

Freedom is a common word these days because it's an uncommon thing, and it is no easier to define than to achieve; yet there is good reason for the exile's paean to that which the American breathes with the very air of his streets and fields. Freedom lives in things which seem little to you, doctor, because you have them for the asking and great to us because deprivation has taught us how intolerable life is without them.

Think of it: you could walk down the street and know with absolute certainty that no Gestapo agent was on your trail; the corner newsstand bulged with publications speaking every possible viewpoint freely; at any hour of the day or night you could turn on the radio and hear authentic news and there was nobody to arrest you for listening. One afternoon I counted in a radius of four square blocks the churches and synagogues of six religious denominations, and walking by them on the weekend saw people freely entering and leaving them without a thought for the secular power which guarantees them complete freedom of worship.

And have you any idea what a miracle of liberty it is to utter your thoughts freely, to sit at home or in a restaurant and air your views on any subject in the world without fearing the police spy at the next table or wondering whether your best friend or your own brother will denounce you to the authorities?

This is not the whole of freedom, but it is a beautiful part of it, and most beautiful is the certainty that nobody is afraid; for in that week of wandering through stores, bars, restaurants, soda fountains and taxis I found no one, however poor or obscure, whose utterance was fettered, who hesitated to speak his mind, right or wrong, to criticize or praise men in power, great or small, or say what he really felt about his work, his government or the universe. After years of Nazi oppression all this seemed very wonderful, and I was happy to breathe the air of a land redolent with that particular kind of freedom.

At the same time I felt keenly the responsibility of being a guest not only in Hague's home but in America itself, and determined to behave as a guest should. What did I know about this immense, complex land, so new on the vast horizon of history, so full of enigmas even for its citizens? It was my business to study patiently this unprecedented republic whose territory and population was as great as that of all Europe beyond the borders of Russia. Indeed, America was like a continent: each of its regions was larger than most of Europe's countries; each had its own climate, produce, character, customs, manners and traditions; yet there was a uniformity and unity binding its millions together in ways Europe had never known. Life in Vienna, especially a life which had perished beyond recall, was no guide whatever in this tremendous new world. The most sensible thing to do for a long time to come was to look, listen and learn.

After a while I began to feel restless. I wanted a place of my own; I wanted to do some work. One morning at breakfast I said so to Hague. He smiled with complete sympathy and understanding, said okay, and took me to his office.

It was located in a towering skyscraper of steel and concrete in midtown, with one entrance in the Fifties, another on Fifth Avenue. High on the marble walls of the lobby was a sequence of murals full of color. The elevator took us noiselessly to the twelfth floor. We passed through a large room filled with desks, files and pretty girls, all neatly dressed, and into a smaller room where a young man was writing at a wide mahogany desk.

"Good morning, Mr. Hague," the young man said without rising.

He was about twenty-eight, obviously an employee, yet there was nothing obsequious in his manner toward Hague. That, too, was America: the shadows of lord and vassal did not exist here, and perhaps only an exile recently arrived could be so acutely aware of their absence.

"Good morning, Michael," said Hague. "I want you to meet my friend Professor Paul Schuman of Vienna." He turned to me. "This is Michael Gordon, my private secretary."

The young man rose and we shook hands. He was taller than I, with broad shoulders, long hands and a fine, strong face.

"Glad to meet you, Professor Schuman," he said. "Mr. Hague has told me nice things about you."

"He's prejudiced," I said.

"Come into my office," said Hague, "both of you."

His office suite was large, full of light, thickly carpeted. He sat down in a swivel chair behind his desk, asked us to draw up chairs and lit a long cigar.

"Michael," he said, "Schuman is going to translate for us. See that he gets plenty of work. He is looking for a place to live in. See that he finds one."

"Okay," Michael Gordon said.

"I'm going to the editorial rooms," Hague said, rising. "You two can get together here." He started to leave but stopped in the doorway and turned to Gordon. "How do you feel about the campaign, Michael?"

"Everybody seems to like O'Dwyer personally," said Michael, "but it seems personality isn't an issue in this campaign and the war is. I'm betting on the mayor's re-election."

"That's how I'm betting, too," said Hague. "See you boys later. If you need me, Michael, you know where to reach me."

Hague went out and when I found myself alone with Michael Gordon, it was not at all hard to get acquainted with him. He had a gift for making people feel at home, and treated me as if we had been friends for years. Apparently Hague had told him a good deal about me. He knew I had taught history in Vienna, that I had spent three years in a Nazi concentration camp and that Peggy had been one of their European correspondents.

"I met Mrs. Schuman once," he said. "She was a wonderful woman."

"You knew her in London?"

"No, in Spain."

It was then I noticed that Michael Gordon's face was at once young and mature; the cheekbones were high, the forehead broad,

the hair tinged with dark red, the eyes blue, full of intelligence, sensibility and candor. I liked him.

"Oh, in Spain," I said lamely.

How far off that terrible warning of contemporary history now seemed.

"I was with the Abraham Lincoln Battalion," Michael said. "Once, after I had recovered from some wounds, they sent me up to work with the press department in Madrid. That was about the time your wife arrived. We all liked her tremendously. When the news came from Andalusia . . ."

He seemed unable to finish the sentence; his face was very serious now, his blue eyes clouded.

"You fought with the Loyalists," I said, almost to myself. "It's strange to think of an American fighting for the democratic idea on European soil." Then I caught myself. "Excuse me: that's ridiculous. I'd forgotten 1917."

"Yes, that, too," Michael Gordon said. "But Spain was different. There are 130,000,000 Americans and they're all kinds; but I like to think that those who went to Spain were typical."

"What really made you go?" I said, then added hastily: "I'm sorry, I had no right to ask that question."

"Why not?" he said. "I know about you and you have a right to know about me." He smiled pleasantly. "Anyway, I like to tell about myself. What writer doesn't?"

"You don't look like a writer," I said. "You look more like an athlete."

"All right; I did play football at Harvard."

"From the playing fields of Harvard to the battlefields of Spain, that's a mystery to me," I said.

So Michael Gordon explained with fine understatement which revealed a person at once unusual and typical of our times. His ancestors had fought with Greene in Vermont, Grant at Richmond and Roosevelt at San Juan. Michael himself was born in California, where his grandfather was a Protestant minister, his father a successful businessman. The Great Depression ruined the family financially, but Michael managed to work his way first through high school, then through college. His facility at sports helped, but the sudden poverty of his family led to an unexpected result. With no money for amusements, Michael began to read.

He read to kill time; then ideas he encountered in books began to stir strange moods and reflections in him. American meanings emerged which he had not known existed; and now he began to see their aura in the streets he walked, the homes he visited, the people

he knew. He did not care much for European or American classics; anything of the past was something you read for classroom. What fascinated him were the books of new American writers, men of my own generation in time whose spirits had been molded in the crucible of the first World War, but who for Michael's generation were already ancestors. He liked them because he understood them: they were free of all literary pose and cant; they captured the swift movement of current life in the new American speech of the surrounding world: they wrote with detachment, power and absolute sincerity, throwing a great hard light across a land beginning to discover the contours of its evolving soul.

Michael loved the new American prose and verse, and love led to imitation: he began to dabble in both.

At first he wrote only for amusement; his original ambition was medicine. But that prosperity which had been promised around the corner remained there; it never showed up; Michael's father never recovered the business he had lost; his sister Joan, three years younger, became a librarian and helped support the family; Michael himself felt his responsibilities so keenly that he quit Harvard before getting a degree and came to New York to look for a job.

That was not easy in the turbulent thirties. The streets of America resounded with the tread of unemployed millions. An entire generation was growing up without knowing work yet desperately wanting it. Veils of traditional illusion and dream dissolved as America discovered it was part of the earth, inexorably subject to laws of contemporary economy and conflict. The air of its great cities was filled with despairs, hopes and panaceas. Young people became passionate politicians grappling with problems at home and abroad. Organizations for saving mankind leaped up everywhere and gave way to new organizations. Magazines and books showing the way out poured from the presses. The meeting hall replaced the gin mill of the previous decade. Artist and writer became social prophet.

Michael Gordon had nothing of the politician in him. He refused to join any organization of any kind; he wanted to be part of things and yet to retain an inner freedom. But he could not reject the ideas of his generation. They overwhelmed him with the evidence of his own senses. Trudging from office to office for a job vainly day after day; crowding with others like himself night after night in cheap restaurants, house parties, meeting halls, immense street demonstrations; seeing poverty, unemployment and despair all around him; feeling the tense enthusiasm of a small vanguard of hope which spoke with peculiar authority from coast to coast of cures to be had

and liberations to come, he could not help coming to certain conclusions; and in those small hours of the morning when he tried to set these down in prose or verse they added up to the fact that the world was one, that mankind was one, that to be an American meant first of all to be a man.

That was how Michael Gordon became interested in events and books of all the continents but chiefly those of Europe. Those things which had been a direct, integral part of my youth reached him as recorded history; he understood them less than I did and more because he saw them across the distance of the years not as isolated explosions whose design would become clear only later, but as a huge pattern, seemingly lucid because already done, complete, irreversible.

In so far as he cared about American politics, Michael was an ardent fan of the New Deal; in so far as he was part of the literary upsurge of his generation, he was sympathetic at home and abroad to all movements seeming to embody that dream of freedom which the American learns with his alphabet. He loathed fascism in whatever guise it appeared, whatever language it spoke, and the sufferings and hopes he shared with his generation gave him a sense for detecting it anywhere. Its unchecked expansion abroad and arrogant rise at home alarmed and spurred him to action. He volunteered to write leaflets, articles and pamphlets for various groups and publications which he would not join but whose war against fascism seemed to him a vital contribution to the cause of liberty everywhere, not least of all in America.

It was strange to discover that this young man, more than a decade my junior and living three thousand miles from Vienna, had seen in the Spanish civil war exactly what Peggy and I had seen: the first great test of strength between fascism and democracy. When the Abraham Lincoln Battalion called for volunteers, he did not hesitate for a moment and considered himself lucky to be accepted. He fought in Spain for eighteen months, was wounded twice, edited a paper in Madrid for the International Brigade, came back to New York with an honorable discharge, and published a book about his experiences.

Hague noticed the book and sent for its author. Michael started in the research department of the Hague publications, was rapidly promoted to the editorial staff of one of the weeklies and finally made Hague's private secretary. This enabled Michael to support his parents and his grandfather in California and to bring his sister Joan to New York where, thanks to his connections, she had a job in the library of one of New York's large universities.

That was the story Michael Gordon told me that morning in

Hague's office, and when I asked him whether he had met Kurt and Hans in Spain he said yes, several times: they were swell and whatever became of them. I told him.

"The Axis boys are butchers," he said. "They've covered continents with blood; double-crossed and assaulted everybody, and there are a lot of Americans who still can't see it." He offered me a cigarette and lit one himself. "Okay," he said, "let's see about your translations."

Michael Gordon gave me plenty of work, saying I could do it at home as soon as I got a place. They would even furnish me with a typewriter. All this was Hague's idea and I liked it.

We were going over some European and Latin-American newspapers, when the telephone rang. Michael picked up the receiver.

"Yes," he said. "No, Hague isn't here. Who? Okay, if he insists on talking to us, put him on." He waited a moment: a hoarse sound scraped the receiver from the other end and Michael answered: "Hello, senator. Mr. Hague isn't here. It's no use, senator. He doesn't want to see you. I don't care if you are downstairs. I'm warning you. You'll only waste your time."

Michael hung up.

"Excuse me, Professor Schuman. I've got a little problem on my hands. Make yourself at home. I'll be with you in a minute."

I went to the window, lit a cigarette and looked out. Fifth Avenue was crowded with people, taxis and busses. The autumn morning was clear; across the sky a plane floated by and it made you feel secure to think it was on a peaceful journey and reminded you that elsewhere planes flew with death in their racks.

"Mr. Hague?" Michael Gordon's voice said over the telephone behind me. "Senator Owen Cope just phoned. He insists on coming here to see you . . . No, he didn't say. I told him, but he insists anyway. He says he flew in from Washington for this. . . . Okay."

As Michael hung up, I turned around and caught a new expression on his face. There was a firm, clean look in his eyes and his features were composed in deliberate discipline.

"Well," he said dryly, "it seems we're going to have some fun this morning."

"What's up?" I said.

Out of the next room voices came through the closed door; deep rolling laughter rose and fell politely.

"There it is," said Michael.

The door opened and a tall white-haired man, dressed neatly in a dark-blue business suit, came in holding a wide-brimmed black fedora in his hand. He looked nearly sixty, but his long body was lithe and wiry, his face strong, clean-cut, tanned. There was an

amused twinkle in his shrewd gray eyes as he looked directly first at Michael, then at me.

"Which one of you gentlemen," he said affably in a resonant voice, "claimed Hague wouldn't see me?"

"I did, Senator Cope," Michael admitted.

The senator carefully placed his hat on the desk and turned to Michael with a pleasant smile on his gaunt, almost Indian face.

"Ten to one Hague sees me," he said.

"Don't take that bet, Michael," Hague's voice said unexpectedly from the doorway. He came into the room smiling. "Of course I'll see you, senator." He moved swiftly past us, slid into the swivel chair behind his desk, casually made the round of introductions and said: "Sit down, gentlemen."

We all took chairs around the desk. Hague passed out cigars and watched Senator Cope. The senator lit his cigar cautiously, like a poker player concealing an ambiguous hand.

"Now, my dear senator," said Hague smiling, "what can I do for you?"

"Aren't you surprised to see me here?" Senator Cope said.

"You're an old, skilled politician, senator," said Hague. "You know that the time to run for re-election is a year before election day. My papers are opposing you. Normally you wouldn't walk into my office like this."

"Normally I wouldn't," Senator Cope grinned. "If I did, you'd record our talk. You'd have a couple of your photographers take pictures of me entering and leaving your office. You'd put me in a very pretty spot."

"How do you know I won't do it now?" said Hague.

"Because these are not normal times," said the senator.

"That's one thing we can agree on," said Hague.

"You bet," Senator Cope said. "If these were normal times, I wouldn't walk into the lion's den barehanded. I'd have brought my Senate investigating committee, a brass band and my own reporters. The headlines would have boomeranged against you."

There was ice in Michael's voice as he suddenly cut in:

"You wouldn't have the nerve, senator. The only man who would have done that kind of thing was Huey Long. He'd have brought the entire Louisiana football team and put on a show for the wire services: LONG INVADES HAGUE'S OFFICE, FLAYING PRO-WAR PUBLISHER."

They all laughed and I joined them without knowing why. These were strange names and customs in a strange land, and I was trying to follow the conversation, but could not see where it was leading.

"Why didn't you arrange to meet me somewhere after dinner,

senator?" Hague asked. "There are plenty of hostesses who still play both sides of the fence."

"No," Senator Cope said coolly. "It's better this way. I want it to be simple, direct, sincere. We're both good Americans. There's no reason why we can't talk things over in the good old American way." He leaned across the desk, looked keenly into Russell's face and said: "Hague, I've wanted to talk to you for a long time. Why do your papers keep hounding me?"

Michael laughed dryly. This side of him puzzled and fascinated me.

Hague said smiling: "You tried to gag the movies, senator. Are you trying to gag the press now?"

"There you go again," the senator complained. "You can't say a word about me without misrepresenting everything I am and everything I stand for. I don't care what you say about me in your other papers, but why do you want to start a paper in my own state to fight me on the war issue?"

"Your state?" said Michael. "I get it: the state is me."

"Isn't your state part of the U.S.A. any more?" Hague asked, with a smile in his eye.

"Sure it is," Senator Cope said. "You can libel me there as easily as in Jew York."

Involuntarily I shuddered: the familiar slur: through my brain came the beat of invading boots thundering across Vienna.

The senator placed his hands firmly on the desk, his fingers were long, square, powerful.

"Hague," he said with an undercurrent of warning in his voice. "Why don't you lay off? What have I ever done against you?"

"Against me, nothing," Hague said. "Against the American people, everything. We're facing the greatest crisis in our history, and you're helping the enemies of democracy."

"No man," Senator Cope said, "has the right to impugn my patriotism."

"That's not the point, senator," said Hague. "I'll grant you patriotism."

"Thanks," the senator said.

"Don't thank him," Michael cut in. "Everybody knows whose last refuge patriotism is."

The senator ignored him, keeping hard gray eyes focused intently on Hague.

"Do you think you have a monopoly on the democratic ideal, Hague?" he said severely. "America means as much to me as to you. That's why I'm fighting to keep warmongers like you from dragging us into Europe's battles."

"Ah," said Hague, "warmongers."

"Yes, warmongers," Senator Cope said harshly.

"That's what Hitler calls us," Hague said. "For two years you've been doing exactly what Hitler wants to see done in this country. Tell me, senator, why do you insist on blaming America for the crimes of the Axis?"

"I'm not ashamed of my record, Hague."

"Of course not. Hitler has no shame either. Nor Mussolini. Nor Tojo. Nor Laval. Nor Quisling. That's one comfort you gentlemen enjoy. You have no conscience."

"You're unfair to the senator," Michael broke in, smiling. "He *has* a conscience. He doesn't want the blood of American boys on his hands. Let that blood be on the hands of the Axis. Let them come and butcher us. It would be un-American to prepare against them."

"Very funny, young man," Senator Cope said dryly. "You can laugh about that on the battlefield where Hague's warmongering will send you. If you're lucky enough to survive, you can laugh again when the war is over and America is left holding the bag by greedy, perfidious powers who think we're suckers." Senator Cope's voice rose to a sharp, rhetorical pitch. "And twenty years from now, you can have a real bellylaugh when you send your son into the *third* World War for democracy, civilization and the Bank of England, and once more America will pay with its blood and money for the crimes and follies of others, instead of minding its own business and letting Europe go to hell its own way. Yes, young man, it's all very, very funny."

I was beginning to understand: the great civil conflict of our times had crossed the sea or had sprung to life here from analogous causes: it was here, here in America, as real, as terrible as anywhere else.

"You're right, senator," Hague said gravely. "It's not funny. And there's nothing funny about the way you and your friends in Congress have been selling out the nation for thirty pieces of silver."

Senator Cope leaned back in his chair and looked at Hague with indignation and suspicion.

"Hague," he said, "I sometimes wonder whether you're as big a fool as you seem. Where have you been all these years? Don't you know what my people back home really think? They don't give a damn for Europe's troubles or Asia's troubles. They're interested first, last and always in America. They're not interested in saving other people's democracy; they want to save their own democracy. That's what you fail to understand, Hague. The American people want peace; they want to mind their own business. And they know

that wartime is a fine opportunity for certain interests to deprive the people of their hard-won political rights and social achievements. They know that democracy can be betrayed and killed; but they know, too, that Hitler isn't the only one who can do it. They were fooled once: they're not going to be fooled again. They're not going to fight for democracy abroad and lose it at home."

Hague remained cool, unimpressed.

"Senator," he said, "don't pose as a friend of the people. There are men on your side of the fence with fine liberal records who have gone haywire in this crisis; they think they're still back in 1917. But you're a horse of a different color. Your record is anything but liberal. From the day you entered politics in your home state you voted for every reactionary and against every progressive measure. You're hardly the man to talk about leaving America undefended in order to preserve its *democracy*. You don't know the meaning of democracy. I think you grossly misjudge the temper of the American people; but even if they were as blind as you say, a truly democratic leader must enlighten them about their precarious position in the world. He must tell them the real state of affairs. The battles of Europe and Asia against the monsters of the Axis is our battle; the fate of liberty everywhere is our fate. You don't care about the American people, Cope. All you care about is your own political power. You are not thinking of the terrible crisis confronting us today: you are thinking of how to cash in on the sincere mistakes of people who do not know the actual danger they are in. You are thinking of the elections of 1942 and 1944. You are ready to sell the American people down the river provided you can rule them. Otherwise you wouldn't talk and act as if America were the aggressor. You would place the blame where it belongs. You would stump the country from coast to coast warning the people against the slavery which the Axis wants to impose upon them. You would tell them what we are telling them: the only answer to total war is total defense. You would tell them the only way we can hope to preserve our democratic way of life is to guard it with all our might and all the alertness of our being against the brutal powers of darkness loose in the world. Someday, Cope, the American people will wake up to the stark realities. They will examine your record. It won't look very pretty."

"I tell you again," Senator Cope shot back, "I'm not ashamed of my record."

"It's one of the most shameful in Congress," Hague said. "Two years ago, when the President made a last attempt to hold the war back—"

"Hold the war back?" Senator Cope grinned. "*That* psychopath in the White House?"

"I see," Michael said; "the senator from South Bavaria reads his Goebbels."

Hague ignored the interruptions and went on:

"The President asked Congress to repeal the arms embargo. He hoped this would scare the Nazis into calling off their planned assault on the world. Who blocked repeal? You and your pals, senator. You said there would be no war. You're a great prophet, senator. Exactly thirty-five days after your prediction Hitler opened fire on humanity."

In all the years I had known him, this was the first time I had seen Hague's strength unleashed in direct conflict. How little we really know our friends, how little we know their splendid powers until the hour of crisis breaks them loose.

"Another lovely spot in your record," Hague went on. "Just before the war broke out, you were in Europe playing around with high Nazi officials. You issued statements to the press saying Germany's claims were *just*. You don't see anything wrong with Hitler; for you the real villain of the piece is the President of the United States. You've been fighting our foreign policy so steadily you've earned more Nazi decorations than Goering."

I still could not believe it. Here, here, too, men refused to learn from experience; if not from the long, rich warnings of the past, at least from the blood and flames of the present which tell unmistakably how liberty is lost and tyranny prevails.

"That isn't all, senator," Hague persisted. "When the President saw that aid to Britain was absolutely essential for our own safety, you and your pals betrayed America again. You denounced and fought all attempts on our part to aid in halting the savage onslaughts of the Axis. You want us to stand idle while these monsters destroy and enslave free peoples. You think we ought to go to sleep while they prepare to attack us. According to you, preparation or aid to the democracies is utterly unmoral, un-Christian and vicious; Nazi Germany is not; on the contrary, its cause is just. You have never denounced Hitler as a dictator, which he is; you reserve that denunciation for our president, one of the greatest champions of freedom who ever sat in the White House."

Senator Cope's gray eyes were now opaque, his face hard, unyielding. He smoked his cigar slowly and watched Hague with the contempt which determines not to argue irreconcilable issues. But Hague continued:

"Everything Hitler has said in Europe, senator, you say in

America. Like Hitler, you accuse England of being the aggressor in this war. That's a whopper of a lie even in your distinguished collection. Like Hitler, you have befouled debates on the destiny of mankind with the old red herring of communism and Russia. Like Hitler, you haven't scrupled to invent a British-Israel World Federation which exists only in the imagination of scoundrels like yourself the world over."

The suave mask fell from Senator Cope's gaunt face; his narrowing eyes revealed hatred.

"Last year," Hague resumed, "I was in London watching the Battle of Britain. I saw a terrible foe pour the fires of hell down upon England. I saw a great people resisting heroically without the necessary equipment. If Britain had fallen, the Western Hemisphere would have been open to Hitler. In that hour, so desperate and dark for the world's freedom, our President transferred fifty obsolete destroyers to the British fleet. In return we were leased bases which greatly strengthened our own defenses. The American people enthusiastically endorsed this piece of common sense. You denounced it with all the venom of your hack oratory."

Senator Cope removed his cigar from his thin, hard mouth and said coolly:

"Leave my oratory out of this, Hague. That Lend-Lease stuff was outright treachery, an act of war."

"That's right, senator," Hague said ironically, "treachery is what helps democracy and strengthens our defenses against the inevitable day when the Axis will attack us. I understand you perfectly: you're fighting selective service because America is betraying Hitler."

"Selective service is military despotism," Senator Cope snapped. "It's inhuman, dictatorial. We don't need it. What are we afraid of? The Jew Deal leaders are a thousand times more dangerous than all the totalitarian leaders put together."

Hague leaned back and laughed softly. Then he turned to me.

"Does that remind you of anything, Paul?"

I couldn't answer. Here, here, too. . . .

"Don't you remember, Professor Schuman?" I heard Michael Gordon say. "Better Hitler than Blum. You see what talented people we have: the senator knows all the ways in which a man can betray his own country in the interests of the Axis."

"Very funny, young man," Senator Cope said dryly.

"Don't be bitter, Michael," Hague said. "The senator is really a hero. He has announced a thousand times he's not afraid of Hitler. He doesn't believe Japan has any aggressive designs against this country. He thinks any preparations on our part, any attempt to act

in concert with the other democracies against the Axis is craven and cowardly."

Senator Cope rose slowly and crushed his dead cigar in the round brass bowl on Hague's desk.

"Have you had your fun?" he said, grinning. He put on his black fedora and carefully adjusted its brim. Hague rose and faced him, and his calm, powerful look reassured me that the falsehood, fear and confusion which fascism was beginning to sow in America would meet the unyielding resistance of all that was sane and good in this country.

"My new paper is staying in your territory, senator," he said. "Every time you and your friends talk Hitler talk, every time you sabotage the nation's efforts to protect itself against Axis aggression, we'll blast the living daylight out of you."

"Okay," Senator Cope said quietly, and in that single word there was an ominous warning.

He walked out of the office closing the door slowly behind him.

"The bastard," Michael said.

"Take it easy," said Hague. He lit a fresh cigar with a steady hand. "Paul here may think the senator got your goat. What do you think of our distinguished statesman, Paul?"

"I don't know," I said. "I'm too shocked to think. I couldn't believe my ears. Has the brown poison come here?"

"You heard the senator," Hague said.

"But surely," I said, "surely nobody takes him seriously, not in America, not here."

"We've got to beat these people, and we're going to," Hague said, "but I wish I could say nobody takes them seriously."

"Today, Senator Cope wants to keep America defenseless," Michael said tensely. "Tomorrow, when the Axis strikes and we have to fight, he'll wave Old Glory and trot out all his hackneyed Fourth of July speeches and still sabotage democracy at every point. And the day after tomorrow, when peace comes, the old vulture will try to cash in politically on any dislocation we have to face. We've got to stop these people, and stop them cold, before it's too late."

Hague watched him reflectively through his cigar smoke and said:

"Don't let the senator spoil your day, Michael. We've got to carry on."

"Right," Michael said, with a faint smile.

"Have you fixed everything for Paul?"

"I gave him those translations to do," Michael said.

"Yes," I said. "I've got plenty of work, thanks. All I need now is a room."

"There you've got me," said Michael. "I'm not very good at these things."

"Joan found the apartment you two live in," Hague said to Michael. "It's a nice one. Maybe she could do something for Professor Schuman."

"That," said Michael, "is an idea."

He went to the phone, dialed a number and listened.

"Is that you, honey?" he said. "Mmmm. . . . Everything's dandy. . . . Listen, baby: do you remember Professor Schuman, the one Mr. Hague told us about the other day? . . . Yeah, the same. . . . He needs a room. Do you know where he can get one? . . ."

He paused and from the other end of the wire a voice hummed on for a moment, then Michael said into the mouthpiece:

"If today is Friday, tomorrow *must* be Saturday. . . . Wait a minute, I'll ask."

He turned to me:

"Could you have lunch with Joan and myself tomorrow?"

"Yes," I said.

He spoke into the phone again:

"Okay, baby."

6

*Oh, who can tell, save he whose heart
hath tried?*

—*The Corsair.*

THE FOLLOWING DAY I had lunch with Michael and his sister in a French restaurant off Lincoln Square.

Joan seemed a rather nice girl. She was about twenty-five, of medium height, slim-waisted, straight-backed; her head was well-set on a pair of wide shoulders, her skin clear under an athletic tan on which the summer had left a few scattered freckles around the fine nostrils; her dark gray-blue eyes were alive with intelligence and mischief; her hair was a dark bright brown suffused subtly with a deep snap of red flame; the forehead and cheekbones were high, the mouth generous and red; the long fingers of her supple hands ended in nails remarkably well-kept.

From our corner table I looked around the restaurant and was moved by the soft brown etchings of Paris along the walls: here was the Pont Alexandre-III, there the Notre-Dame cathedral and farther on the Madeleine.

When my turn came to order I asked, not quite aware of what I was doing, for roast duck and Chablis. Michael insisted fowl takes red wine. I agreed and refused to change my order.

The luncheon was good and Michael's conversation amusing, especially when he talked a hard-boiled lingo which I can't reproduce: it seemed completely at variance with his deepest instincts, yet managed to express them with a kind of violent poetry. He talked about the municipal campaign, told anecdotes about the district attorney and the Little Flower, tore the isolationists neatly to pieces and went into raptures over *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Then he recited one of his own poems and I was surprised to see how different its language was from his ordinary speech. I remember it ran something like this: Death explodes across endless horizons: bodies, pouring blood, collapse like broken puppets: these are no longer men: too many killers, too many victims at last annihilate every soul: only Will remains, stripped to the bone of desire: the will to live and die: and the arm, despairing automaton, that loads the gun and pulls the

trigger till death overwhelms the earth, absolute monarch exacting obedience from all: Death lives on life, life on death: and now at last and once again the vapors of the dream drift away leaving stark wonderment, merciless questions punctuating history's vermilion firmament raining blood across this nightmare: The dream was love, charity, justice: later there will be other dreams; new myths, alluring monuments of experience: but what you see today is what it is: mad Caesar, frothing at the lips, marauds with all-devouring sword while men kneel in adoration to kiss the boot that tramples them.

"That's not bad," I said, "but rather too gloomy, don't you think?"

"I wrote that just after Munich."

"Haven't you something more cheerful?"

"I have my Pollyanna moods," Michael said, smiling. "But tell me first: what do you think of things?"

"It's too soon to judge," I said. "The future determines the past."

Michael whipped out a pencil and notebook.

"Say that again?" he urged.

"The future determines the past," I said.

He wrote it down.

"That's neat."

"Don't give me the credit; it belongs to a California professor."

"Good for California," said Michael.

Through all this Joan said little, but she had a remarkable way of listening. Just to make conversation, I asked her whether she had ever written verse, and she said: yes, once: when she was twelve. It was a brief tribute to her brother, whom she obviously liked a great deal, and consisted of two lines:

Michael G.

Is okay with me.

The thing I liked most about her was that she turned on no pretentious feminine charm and asked no personal questions. That was all to the good: I felt detached from everything and everyone.

After lunch, Michael went back to the Hague publications and Joan took me room hunting through the West Eighties. We went up and down elevators and stairways, through dark rooms and light. Joan tested mattresses and linens, looked into bathrooms and clothes closets, cross-examined landladies and superintendents about electricity, gas, and steam radiators. I was impressed by her quiet efficiency and grateful for her help; and as the afternoon wore on, I began thinking of all the furnished rooms I had seen and how many lonely people there were in New York.

Toward four o'clock we found a room on the top floor of an old brownstone house half a block from Central Park West. I liked and Joan approved it. Its two windows faced a back yard with a tree. The place was quiet, spacious and cost only six dollars a week. I paid the superintendent a week's rent in advance and Joan took me to Columbus Circle to shop for a used desk. By the time we found one and ordered its delivery on Monday, it was evening and we were both tired. I thought it would be only polite to ask Joan to dinner. She said she'd be glad to come some other time; tonight she had a date.

The next day she arrived at my place with Michael and a portable radio.

"Please take it," she said. "It's only a loan and you can return it someday. Right now you need it and we have another like it."

"Take it," Michael urged.

Joan called the superintendent's wife and made her change the curtains. Then she and Michael and I went out to a late and very pleasant Sunday breakfast in a restaurant on Broadway and Eighty-sixth Street; and there, because I happened to remark that I needed books, Joan offered to take me shopping later in the week to the Fourth Avenue secondhand bookshops.

I hardly knew how to thank these wonderful young Americans for their kindness to an exile.

I lived in a remarkable neighborhood. Facing Central Park were block after block of magnificent apartment houses inhabited by the well-to-do. Lining the curb in solid lines were their Packards, Cadillacs and Buicks. But turn any corner, walk down any side street, and you will see old brownstone houses full of furnished rooms. Europe separated its rich and poor; here they live next door to each other.

The furnished rooms, I discovered, were occupied by unmarried people, mostly men. Many of them were looking for jobs. You always ran into Greeks, Spaniards, Poles and Irishmen; but scattered through the neighborhood there was a colony of Central European refugees. Every Thursday you saw them trooping down to Julius's newsstand on Columbus Avenue for their copy of the *Aufbau*.

The brownstone house in which I lived was run by an elderly German couple who had come to New York thirty years ago. Mr. Vogel, a man of fifty with a tense kind face and thin white hair, had once been a machinist with an AFL union card. He must have been something of a socialist in his youth, for he told me he used to raise money for the *Volkszeitung* in the old days. He hated the Nazis like poison and complained to me once that too many Americans confused the German people with Hitler's gangsters.

I slept on a hard narrow cot with an uncomfortable pillow, happy this was not the concentration camp. Sometimes I kept the light on late into the night and did nothing but enjoy the awareness of new-found freedom. In the morning I would walk around my room or look out the window.

The tree in the back yard was bare with late autumn; it would bloom in the spring. Across the yard I could see an old man with a gaunt face looking out his window; he wore a shirt with short sleeves and a worker's cap. At the next window a middle-aged woman was combing her hair before a mirror.

I turned back to my room and examined the pictures on the wall. Here a gilt-framed lithograph showed a European village in soft colors: before the inn stood a covered wagon with two horses, one black, the other white: two peasants were unloading vegetables: the innkeeper and his wife carried baskets of fruit into the hostelry: behind it rose a Gothic church: in the distance to the right, a castle: and somehow this cheap print contained the vanished Europe of castle, cathedral and peasant. And here was another print, larger, more flamboyant: an eighteenth century brig sailed waters too brightly blue under skies streaked too incredibly with dawn: the sails billowed too regularly, but it was all beautiful because there was peace in this room and in the city around me security and acceptance. At least I was not hounded by the brown monster of our times: I was beginning to live a little and every sight and sound was dear, as it must be to all who strive to waken from the dead. I was content to look at the ship on the sea against the sky without wanting to be on it: I had no desire to go anywhere. And here, in that dark strip of wall which divided two yellow panels, was a small colored print of Millet's *Angelus*: the peasant and his wife stood praying in the dusk: the man had left his hoe upright in the soil, the woman was close to the wheelbarrow: their heads were bowed: the peasant's hands were hidden under the cap they held, but you could see his wife's hands folded in prayer. It was a very small picture I would have despised in Vienna; but here it seemed full of peace, and I knew this peace emanated partly from the artist, partly from the religious saga which had moved him, and mostly from my own heart at this moment.

Oh, what riches there are in this little art museum of mine in the heart of New York! The furniture is cheap, the carpet threadbare, its floral designs tasteless; and I know when I go to wash at the sink there will be cockroaches; but everything is lovely because of the freedom which surrounds everything. Even the bridge lamp beside the couch illumines the imagination as I look at it this wonderful autumn morning: the tropical scene on its waxed paper cone is painted in garish colors: exaggerated green palm leaves shade a

little yellow hut in the desert. I've always wanted to visit the tropics, but not today: I want to be just where I am, in America, Manhattan, the West Eighties.

I shaved, dressed, made some tea on the little gas stove near the door and went to my desk. It stood in the northwest corner of the room, fitting snugly against the wall in the niche between the western window and the boarded-up fireplace whose old-fashioned mantelpiece was crowded with books. I sat down to work on translations for Hague's papers and turned on the radio. Tchaikowsky's *Nutcracker Suite* filled the room. I worked for several hours, then began to browse through my books. I had not read a book for three years, and here was a history of the early Roman Empire and Guizot's history of France and the Random House edition of Freud's writings and Schopenhauer's essays and Friedrich Engels's polemic against that nitwit Duehring and next to it Robertson's history of the Christian church.

That was the volume I could not resist reading. It was a mistake. The printed words were harmless enough; they said the tenets and character of the Paulicians have been the subject of controversy which too often has been largely influenced by the party interests of those who have shared in it; but they reminded me of my last talk with Inspector Keller about the Eusebian manuscript, then about my visions the details of which I could not recall and the memory of whose appearance frightened me. I wondered whether the horrors of the concentration camp had doomed me to see hallucinations for the rest of my life and became very depressed.

Clearly, I was leading a lonely life which I was afraid to abandon because I dreaded the external world which had become for me so mysterious and implacable. Occasionally I visited the Hagues; twice I had lunch with Michael and Joan Gordon. Once, as a polite gesture to repay Joan for her help, I took her to dinner and a movie. It was pleasant enough. We began to call each other by our first names. But nothing seemed real. My feelings were paralyzed, and afterward I went home convinced I had made a fool of myself.

In my room I sought refuge in work and the radio. All day long I listened with a sense of not being wholly cut off from the world to that station on which, from morn to midnight, Bach and Shostakovitch, Beethoven and Gershwin shake hands over the big, big bottle and the coffee is so good you want a second cup; and where, in that surprised moment when the last note of Berlioz evaporates, you can go modern with the new king-size cigarette whose smoke clears to reveal the Red Army exacting a heavy toll from the common foe on the sanguinary fields of the Ukraine deciding the fate of civilization.

Yes, reality came over the refuge of the radio, too. I remember

one morning when the breakfast symphony ended with the celestial strains of Mendelssohn's concerto for violin and orchestra and the newscaster came on to report the latest Nazi lies: the Jews started this war; they are not human beings and do not deserve to be treated as such. I thought of old Professor Gross far away in conquered Vienna and wondered how a Jew must feel hearing these frightful inventions. My father used to say that Jew-baiting is the characteristic sign of a backward civilization. In that case, Europe was indeed in a bad way. Then I realized that at this very moment millions of Jews in America heard reports of Nazi lies and crimes against them. How did they feel? Had two thousand years of persecution made it easier for them to withstand this one? Were they despondent in the ultimate chambers of their hearts? Did they cry out in their sleep: how long, O Lord, how long? Or were they fortified by centuries of endurance through all the barbarisms of our Western world? Did they think of their brown oppressors and say: we have survived others, we shall survive you? I did not know the answers. Who can penetrate the secret feelings of him who has been unjustly hounded over and over again and who is the first to minimize his sufferings? I was ashamed of Europe, deeply, terribly ashamed, all the more so because the Jews have forgiven us the atrocities we have committed against them for two millennia and will, no doubt, continue to forgive us.

One Saturday morning Joan phoned me.

"How are you, Paul?" she said. "Where have you been keeping yourself? We haven't seen you for ages."

"We saw each other not so long ago," I said.

"It feels like ages. What on earth have you been doing?"

"Working."

"All the time?"

"Of course not."

"What are you doing this afternoon?"

"Let me see . . ."

"Michael told me you won't get any new translations till Tuesday. This is Saturday and you're not doing anything, I'm sure. You just want to stay home. Is that nice, you personal isolationist?"

Joan was right. I had already begun to find work impossible, and how could I tell her that I was now spending all my time, morning, afternoon and evening making the round of the movie houses along Broadway from Eighty-ninth Street to Lincoln Square?

"I'm free this afternoon," I said.

"That's better," said Joan's voice. "Michael and I are going to see the Guernica mural at the Museum of Modern Art."

Later, when the three of us stood looking slowly at Picasso's masterpiece and saw the men and horses in death agony and the mothers carrying their wounded children, Michael said:

"This is the Spain we fought for."

I thought of the grave in Andalusia.

Soon the drawings transcended all personal grief and said things beyond Spain itself and even beyond Europe and America united at this moment by Picasso's art. The irresistible power of the painter shattered stereotypes of jaded vision, ripped old veils asunder and revealed mankind in a new light of struggle, suffering, hope and redemption.

How the galvanic lines and curves summed up the immense records of our historic past! The matrons mourning on the steles of Athens emerged again in Guernica's women with flowerlike eyes whose tears fell along diagonal furrows: the fierce intensity of Christian portraits arose from their second century tombs resurrected as Spaniards crying with protruding tongues for that liberty in whose sacred name they yesterday laid down their lives: agony of spirit, mysterious hieroglyphic of hands and lips which never fail to say what must be said leaped out of the Reformation's rebellion, grief and unyielding aspiration to telegraph the code of Gruenewald's sublime altarpiece in dots and dashes of our own chaotic century torn with suffering, resolute with great expectations. And everything appears simultaneously; all sides of object and event are here as past, present and future merge into a single vast sun of time to illuminate man's august drama hitherto seen through a glass darkly, now face to face in the fiery hour when indignation and despair are engulfed by a love which rises gigantic with the sword of righteousness in its hand.

We left the Museum of Modern Art, walked down West Fifty-third and up Fifth Avenue. Joan was telling Michael she guessed the Guernica mural was about the highest point in the art of our times, but I wasn't listening and could only stare at the crowds which flowed past us.

How different people look in the street after you have seen Picasso: they appear new and strange, as if you had just arrived from Mars instead of a concentration camp. See how this magician of the plastic has announced a compelling truth too easily forgotten: people grow, change, advance: eyes, faces, hands, feet are made in the spirit become flesh: man's immemorial cries of pain and ecstasy have shaped his throat, mouth and lips: the inexorable need for air has molded the contours of his nose: Picasso waves his necromantic brush and now you see how man is, man in the making, eternally organic and spiritual, the ever-changing sum total of human history;

the astonishing, inspiring vision of personality deeper than the brain, more everlasting than any one man rising and sinking swiftly among the raging billows of time which endlessly carry forward the enigmatic caravans of our destiny.

"Did you like the Guernica, Paul?" I heard Joan say.

"Yes," I said. "Definitely."

For some reason, I always found it hard to look at Joan, and when I was away from her I could not visualize her at all. Now I thanked her and Michael for a pleasant afternoon, said good-bye and went back to my room.

Why am I telling you these apparent trifles, doctor? Perhaps to conceal the truth which was pretty awful. My obsessions were becoming more acute from day to day. I found myself unable to do anything except go to the movies, and when Hague or Joan or Michael managed to draw me out of my shell for a few hours, I was impatient to leave and ran back to my false refuge as fast as possible. My soul slumbered heavily in the conviction that it was wholly dead; my brain assured me I had perished on the scaffold that crazy execution day and had never been resurrected.

One morning, however, I decided to fight my obsessions by reading some new books. Maybe the impact of new ideas would awaken my mind from its dogmatic slumber. The great university library was only fifteen minutes from my room, and Hague had arranged privileges for me there. He had the illusion I might be encouraged to write something, perhaps even to start my book on human freedom all over again. I had no such hopes.

I took the streetcar uptown and reached the university at noon. The sight of the buildings made my heart stand still. I had not seen a university since my arrest in Vienna, and postponed the pleasure of entering this one.

First I stepped into a drugstore across the street and ordered a soda. The place was full of young students growing up in the second World War as I had grown up in the first. Among them were some pretty girls with scholarly tomes on the counter before them. Heirs of the feminist revolt, they seemed less rebellious and tragic than their mothers, accepting as a matter of course the freedom bequeathed to them by great pioneers, like all young beneficiaries of any revolution.

What were these boys and girls thinking of? There are always mysteries: when we are young we wonder what our elders think: in middle age we long to ferret out the secrets of our juniors. About many things these students must feel as we did and our fathers and mothers before us: the great constants are always here: parents, teachers, friends, love, career, marriage, children. But these are now

set in a new matrix, the most enormous war in the annals of man whose aftermath nobody can really foresee, and there lay the mystery.

Crossing the street, I went past the School of Journalism and along the wire fence which enclosed the athletic field. A young student in a sweatshirt, shorts and black running shoes was scooping the earth with his hands, digging two oblong holes close together. He straightened up, placed his toes into the tiny trenches, crouched in the starting position and straightened up to examine the trenches again. Then he bent his knees, touched the ground with his fingers spread and, like a lithe animal, leaped forward. He ran for twenty yards and turned back to experiment with the starting holes he had dug. At the other end of the field, two teams of four students each were kicking a football around. Near the street, a pale young man with glasses watched the game seated on a sundial. Behind him the curb was lined with automobiles, a sight I had never seen on the Vienna campus; and in the distance, glittering in the autumn sun, was the majestic statue of Alma Mater, seated in classic calm above the square.

Entering the library, I saw high across its side the names of great Europeans: Horace, Tacitus, Augustine, Aquinas, Dante: a poet, a historian, two theologians and again a poet, one who made the greatest poetry out of history, theology and politics.

The room of current books was on the ground floor. Browsing among the shelves, I was astonished to see how many new volumes had been published during the three years I had lost in the concentration camp. It made you dizzy to realize all the events which had transpired in that time, so brief and so long, all the thoughts which had been thought, all the new writers who had emerged. Truly, a new and unknown world.

And when I began to read, I was surprised to find that some of the new books expressed ideas which had come to me in prison. But wasn't it foolish to be surprised? All the men and women of my time had essentially the same tradition, and ideas ignited in my brain by the sufferings of the concentration camp were bound to be ignited in the brains of others whom I did not know by the greater sufferings of the world which was our common habitation and destiny. I rejoiced that these thoughts had been expressed; yet across this pleasure there came a shadow of pain as I realized that these new writers had set their ideas down in print, had given them shape and substance, while mine had evaporated in prison talk, dreams and visions. Then I reproached myself for the pain and strangled it before it could become envy, and remembered I had once told Kurt it does not matter who says a thing as long as it is said.

Did work await me also in a world in which there was so much to be done and said, where every pair of hands was needed, every heart and every mind? Alas! the struggle would advance without me. There was no place for me, nothing to do. I had not yet transcended my suffering nor risen anew from the ashes of my vicarious death.

The librarian announced closing time. It was dusk outside, and at this moment I suddenly remembered that Joan worked in the building.

"Could you tell me, please, where Miss Joan Gordon is?" I asked the librarian.

"Third floor, in the research room."

Upstairs I passed the painting of England's crowned heads receiving distinguished Americans on the campus, and went into the reading room at the far end of the long library. At the desk they told me Miss Gordon had just left. I felt depressed, reproached myself for my stupidity. I was glad I knew Joan and that she was kind to me in this strange new world. I decided it might be nice to spend the evening with her and, recovering the power to act, phoned her house.

Michael answered.

"Joan has a dinner date," he said. "But she promised to phone me for messages afterward. What shall I tell her?"

"Nothing," I said. "I think I'll go home."

In a Chinese restaurant I dined alone on chicken soup, beef chop suey, golden limes and oceans of tea, and went back to my room.

Sitting idly at my desk, I could hear voices across the yard and, from time to time, airplanes overhead droning their way across Manhattan's skies to and from La Guardia Field. I tried to read a famous French writer who claimed that history, like man, seems to have no reason for being save the search, the possession, the loss and the new search for a state of love, and put the book down with unaccountable irritation. Memories of the past, ordeals of concentration camp and execution block assailed me with negation, despair and paradox. I sought refuge in Peggy's school copy of John Milton which her sister had given me in London's blackout. Anxious to escape beginnings, I turned to the final lines of England's epic: the world was all before them, where to choose their place of rest, and Providence their guide: they, hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow, through Eden took their solitary way. . . . In the margin along these verses Peggy had written and underlined: *Every end is a beginning.*

The buzzer's hoarse ring announced a phone call. That meant

climbing down three flights, and I cursed the unknown nine-o'clock intruder.

It was Joan.

She asked whether she could come up. Without surprise or pleasure, I said yes.

But once she was in the room, I was glad. At that moment I wanted very much to talk with somebody and Joan was good company. There was a wonderful glow of physical and spiritual health in all her movements and she spoke easily of her childhood in California, conjuring up a land of sun, enchantment and fabulous wealth. I liked the affectionate way she talked of her parents, her grandfather, her schoolmates, and the enthusiasm she gave equally to swimming and Shakespeare, swing and Bach, Ginger Rogers and Freud. When she rose to examine the books on my desk, I noticed that her walk was supple, athletic, sensuous; and when she remarked without looking at me, "They tell me your wife was a wonderful woman," my reserve melted and I began to tell her things about myself, at first with some hesitation, then fully and freely, glad to find someone to listen. And strange what one remembers at such times: I told her about Babette but not about the Schmerlingplatz massacre, about the Semmering but not about Floridsdorf, about Kurt in Vienna but not about his ordeal in the Big Hall; and Joan might have imagined that I had led an extremely happy life if she had not dragged out of me some details about the concentration camp, the execution included.

That week I took Joan out almost every evening. We went to the movies, of course, and in her company I realized the film need not be an escape; it could give you, if your spirit was integrated with the world, marvelous insight into reality. I found the screen a teacher from which I could learn a great deal about the language, customs, manners and ethics of America. The film was a world of action, speech and humor incredibly swift, and also a world of right and wrong in which a healthy moral sense prevailed.

Afterward, Joan and I would go into a drugstore for sodas or a bar for beer, and I found myself telling her so much about my past lives that I began to resent it. She must have noticed it, for one night she said:

"Paul, is there something wrong?"

"Certainly not."

"You've been hurt a lot. Please don't get bitter."

"I'm not bitter."

"Some people get hurt so badly they develop thick skins which shut out the world."

"A very profound remark," I said ironically.

I paid the check, took her home and for a week did not even call her up.

Then, one night as I was reading at my desk, Joan called on me. She came into the room smiling, threw her short fur jacket on the couch and sat down. She looked beautiful facing me from the arm-chair in my lamp-lit room, but that had nothing to do with me. Her anxiety about me was a nuisance. It was none of her business what I did with my existence. I avoided her clear gray-blue eyes when she said:

"Paul, we're worried about you."

"There's nothing wrong, I tell you."

"Yes, there is, Paul. You keep to yourself too much. And you're not working."

"I'm translating."

She started to light a cigarette. This took her gaze away from me and I was able to look at her. She was young yet amazingly grown-up, and she was obviously sincere. But my troubles were none of her business. Even if I wanted to, how could I tell her what I really felt? And if I did tell her it would create an intimacy I didn't want.

"Translation isn't your work," Joan said, looking up. "You should be teaching and writing."

Her voice was so warm and gentle at that moment that my reserve melted again.

"I can't," I said.

"Why not?"

"I just can't."

"Paul, please listen: I know you've gone through all kinds of hell. But you've every opportunity to start a new life in this country."

"Yes," I said. "And I'll be perfectly frank with you: from the bottom of my heart I envy my fellow exiles here. They face their ordeals marvelously. Look how courageously they have adapted themselves. They teach, write, act in plays and films, lecture, edit newspapers and magazines, get jobs, open businesses; they conduct dozens of circles and groups; lead energetic, useful lives. I wish I were like them. Unfortunately I'm not."

"But why, Paul?"

"I don't know."

"We all want to help you."

"You've all been very kind."

"If you'll write something, Paul, I'll edit and type it for you. I'll take it to the magazines myself. I'm sure Hague will be glad to publish something of yours. Please, Paul, I want to help."

"Do you?" I said irritably. "Why?"

"I suppose," she said quietly, "it's because—because—I—like you."

"That's very nice of you," said my frayed nerves. "But you'll only be wasting your time on a hopeless case. I can't help it if we live in a brutal, unjust world which has no room for people like me. I don't need a mother."

Her lovely face looked up at me in pained surprise.

"Oh Paul," she whispered. "You poor darling."

Tears came into her eyes. I took her hand.

"Forgive me," I said.

I kissed her. Her mouth was so warm it frightened me. She rose abruptly.

"I'd better go," she said.

As I helped her with her short fur jacket, I said without thinking:

"You're young, Joan. I hope you won't misunderstand."

"Your kiss?"

"Yes."

"I won't," she said, opened the door quickly and vanished down the stairs.

I felt irritated with her, the world and myself. These days everything I said and did was stupid and awkward. Ought I to see a doctor? Nonsense. All I needed was a good night's sleep.

For hours I tossed about feverishly; then I fell asleep and had a peculiar dream, echo of an old one so far away in time and so deep down in the cavern of forgotten things that I could recall only the analogous flavor of its experience. I was standing in Lincoln Square looking up at the statue of Dante which rises there with noble, bitter, unforgettable face scarred by love, politics and thought. The poet held his book in his hands almost like a shield against a hostile, uncomprehending world. I was struck by the fact that he was standing in a square named after a great American who resembled him as the truly great men of all ages resemble each other in their profound desire to advance the knowledge and happiness of mankind. Across the square I noticed a twelve-story apartment house of drab yellow brick and on the slab above the numerals commemorating the year in which it was built: 1927: the year of the Schmerlingplatz massacre. All at once a circular wooden platform appeared in the square with a harpsichord in the center, and beside it stood Joan smiling down at me. To my astonishment she was dressed as a Salvation Army lassie with a blue bonnet on her head and a tambourine in her hand. And look! the statue of the great Florentine came alive. Gravely the poet sat down at the harpsichord and began playing something to which Joan beat an accompaniment.

But I could not hear their music because the crowd which now filled the square and the busses rushing by shook the air with tumultuous, enigmatic acclaim. Then the crowd and busses vanished and I heard Dante playing the majestic harmonies of *Prelude, Chorale and Fugue*; while in a voice of immaculate beauty, Joan sang a strange familiar song which in the dream seemed absolutely mad and the final essence of the heart's sanity:

Truth is better than falsehood:

Love is better than hate:

Good is better than evil:

Life is better than death.

I woke with a start and turned on the light. A strong desire came over me to write and all at once, to my great surprise, I knew precisely what I wanted to say. Dawn was just beginning to open the sky slowly and a plane passed over my roof; the city was very still. In that expanding light and diminishing silence I wrote a brief essay, the first thing I had written since my arrest three years ago in Vienna.

And it did not matter to me at all now whether the essay was good, bad or indifferent: I was serenely happy merely to complete this, my first American work.

7

*Do not believe
Because the blood has not been answered
The lie will not be answered.
—Archibald MacLeish.*

AT NOON I called Joan at the library and asked her to dine with me. She said: yes, gladly, and there was something in her voice which made me feel I had known her for ages and could speak freely to her about anything. When I told her, as casually as I could, that I had written something for her, she laughed softly and said:

"Thank you, Paul. I'm glad it's for me, but I'm more glad you wrote something."

We dined in a Viennese restaurant in the West Eighties. It was located in a small hotel full of refugees from my native city; the white tablecloths, the discreetly separated tables, the quiet was exactly what we wanted. Even on the Ringstrasse, the cook who created our dinner this evening must have been a wonder of the first magnitude. Gansleber, Lungenstrudel soup, roast goose and Marillenknödel were all perfect; the California Riesling had an Old World flavor; and Joan seemed to be delighted with everything.

All through dinner she kept asking about my essay; and the moment our waiter brought us two coffees with Schlagobers, she insisted I read it to her.

Because of what happened afterward, doctor, I think you had better read the essay yourself. Here it is:

There are personalities who, once encountered, are never forgotten. Lately I have been thinking a great deal about a man like that. I have never met him in person, but heard his story some time ago. It seemed remarkable even then, yet I did not really appreciate it until recent events opened my eyes to some of its implications. There are distinguished European writers and scientists in this country today whose stories at many points resemble his; but his came first and it has so much meaning at this moment, especially for America, that I cannot get it out of mind.

The story is of a young man of middle-class family who starts

out in his twenties on a literary career. Everything is in his favor. He has good looks, fine manners, an independent income, a thorough education, excellent social connections and a remarkable mind. His father, a well-known lawyer, encourages his literary ambitions. Success crowns his early work. It acquires a growing reputation for the splendor of its ideas and the unusual beauty of its language.

This man's country is governed by a tyrant facing strong popular opposition. The man sympathizes with the people, but is not especially interested in politics. When he is almost thirty, he makes a tour of various European capitals. There he meets on terms of equality leading writers, scientists, philosophers and statesmen. He is happy.

Suddenly he receives grave news from home. Despot and radical opposition have come to grips: it looks like civil war. The man feels he cannot indulge his private tastes when his country is entering upon one of the greatest crises in its history; he cannot be neutral in the momentous struggle between tyranny and freedom, past and future. He goes home at once and explains his decision firmly: I consider it low, he says, that while my fellow countrymen are fighting at home for liberty, I should be traveling at my ease for intellectual culture.

At home he finds the people gathering strength. Civil war breaks out. The man throws himself into the people's fight with the only weapon he has—his pen. He abandons imaginative writing, until now the most important thing in his life, and pours out political pamphlets defending men's inalienable right to think, believe and speak freely according to their conscience. He lashes out against censorship as a dangerous assault upon the human spirit, fiercely repudiates the prejudice that any individual may oppress his fellow men. He is convinced that his country, and possibly the whole world, is about to enter a new era in which all that is good, true and just will prevail.

The old regime is overthrown. A republic is established. The man writes new pamphlets, powerfully defending government of, by and for the people. Partisans of the old regime reply with attacks on its literary champion. Unscrupulous lies are circulated about him. His character and motives are impugned. But neither his pride nor his faith in the democratic cause is shaken. All sovereignty, he says, comes from the people alone; no nation should submit to tyranny. At the same time, he urges the people of his country to be worthy of the liberty they have just won.

These books in defense of the young republic create a profound impression at home and abroad. Their effect is especially great in America.

For eighteen years, this man abandons imaginative literature for

political polemics. He lives through turbulent, creative events of the first magnitude and takes active part in them. He even represents the republic in an official capacity: in its name he writes dispatches on war and peace and protests against the oppression of the people in other countries.

Never a bigot, he squarely faces the complexity of the change which has come over his country. He sees the various factions of his party differ, quarrel, break. Some of its leaders rise to the heights of power; others are expelled; still others are crushed. Seeing things on his own side which need to be criticized he does not spare them; he attacks spokesmen of the new order who seem to him as tyrannical as those of the old; he maintains that the people entrust rulers with power only that it may be used for the public good.

Now dark days come upon the republic. Its great leader dies; partisans of the old order and renegades of the new conspire to restore tyranny. The man senses this and writes his last political pamphlet. It is one of his most stirring defenses of freedom, but the day of eloquence is done. The republic is overthrown; a new despot takes power; leading republicans are forced to flee abroad; others are imprisoned; some are executed. Everyone and everything connected with the days of the republic is hounded without mercy.

The man feels the catastrophe keenly. The golden age is over; the good work seems to be undone; his own life is in danger. For a time he is compelled to hide, a political refugee in his own country. He is arrested and it costs him a great deal of money to purchase his release. The new tyranny publicly burns his books. Abandoned by all except a few faithful friends, he is an outcast grappling with financial and domestic troubles.

Yet it is precisely at this desperate moment of private and public catastrophe that his spirit soars to its greatest height. His courage will not bend nor his spirit yield. Gone is the republic founded by the finest men of his generation, but its mighty dream lives on in him.

Contemtpuous of the new tyranny, the man now rises above sorrow and difficulty to concentrate on a long piece of creative writing. He had planned it two decades earlier, when no man could foresee the future, and had sacrificed it to serve the republic. Now he resumes it with maturer power and fuller vision. He works upon it slowly, steadily, for seven long years. When it is done, he gives the world a masterpiece.

The theme of his new work is freedom. It is a triumph of art and soul. Few books are so wonderful to read; few leave you with so much hope in man's future. It is more than a book: it is a deed, a tremendous act of faith uttered in an age of despair, a vast light thrown over an era of darkness.

This man might be a Spaniard exiled by Franco, a German driven

out by Hitler, a Czech fighting abroad for the liberation of his people. But his country was England, his party that of the Puritans, his great book *Paradise Lost*.

The three hundred years which separate us from this man have not diminished his vitality; he is far more alive than the madmen who today seek to destroy the freedom he championed. They will vanish; he will remain. And he will always be remembered by the name he signed to his magnificent Defense for the People of England: *John Milton, Englishman*.

"I like it," Joan said, when I had finished reading.

"Do you really?" I said. "That makes me happy." Then out of a clear sky, I added: "I wonder what Uncle Peter would think of it?"

"Does it matter very much?"

"Milton was accused of Arianism."

"Okay, professor," Joan said, laughing. "I'll bite."

"A heretic named Arius was excommunicated in the fourth century," I said. "But a thousand years later his ideas found new vitality in the Protestant movements. If my uncle heard me praise the greatest of Protestant poets . . ."

"I'm more interested," Joan said, "in what Dr. Foster would say about your essay."

"Dr. Foster?"

"Haven't you met him at Hague's? He's one of New York's leading psychoanalysts."

"Never heard of him."

"You will. He has analyzed some of our best citizens."

"A soul-prober. Why should he be interested in my essay?"

"You left out one little thing," Joan said. "Milton was blind when he wrote his masterpiece."

"Blind and clairvoyant," I said.

"I still say—page Dr. Foster."

"Who did you say he was?"

"A psychoanalyst."

"Why are you telling me this?"

"Because you asked me. Let me have that essay of yours. I'll type it and give it to Michael. Maybe he can get it into one of the Hague papers."

"No," I said, "I don't want that at all. I don't want it printed as a favor. Try it somewhere else. Let it make its way on its merits, if any."

"Okay," she said. "I'll take it around to the magazines myself."

I took Joan home and on the way back to my room I was seized by a new obsession. In the old days I would have considered the

Milton piece just another piece of work. Compared to the volumes I had published it was the very slightest kind of trifle. But it is precisely trifles which feed an obsession. The Milton piece became for me a kind of test. If it were accepted and published, then there was room for me in the New World; if not, then I was an unwanted stranger. Could anything be crazier? Yet there it was, and so persistently did the essay haunt me as a test of my right to exist that while it was making the rounds of the editorial offices I found it impossible to live normally. I stopped working again, spent ten and twelve hours a day in the movies, read no newspapers and in general withdrew from reality.

Yet the real pursues us wherever we go, and when we are unable or unwilling to face the present there break through its curtain of terror those distorted fragments of the past which ought to have perished long ago, but now persist in emerging as false prophets of the future. At the most unexpected moments, just when I tried to lose all memory and foresight in a darkened movie house or among the flowing multitudes of Broadway, space would become identical with Kurt's eyes crying out in silent accusation against the injustice of our time and all times everywhere, the relentless joy of the strong tormenting men drugged with shapeless hopes of wisdom and virtue; and sometimes the inspector's gaunt face would unfold above the roofs of New York, asserting the persistence of evil until it became Senator Cope's suave head grinning affirmation to the fear drumming in my brain: *here too . . . here too . . .* and my blood would freeze at the thought of millions obsequiously cheering McGillicuddy.

It was at this time of gathering breakdown that I invented McGillicuddy, unknown tyrant of historical nightmares to come. Nobody would know where he was, what he looked like, what he would do till the actual moment of dire destiny crashed about our heads, brought down in pathologic tumult by our own folly. Did anyone in 1914 foresee the despots who leaped out of the womb of war and vengeance to fill the world with all their power and crime? Did anyone suspect their local habitations or their names? Unknown, unexpected they burst from the hell of their unbearable obscurity and caught men's love of freedom in the trap of obeisance, and their very abominations made them tower above the crowds hailing these saviors of blood and iron. Who knows, then, the dank climax of these tortuous days, what violence justice must once again sustain at the hands of that killer thirsting to avenge his anonymity along the treacherous heights of history? Yes, here, here, perhaps here too there lurks in cities dedicated to freedom that thaumaturgist of evil who stalks the hour when the mighty brain of a people cracks in anguish and a nation cries out madly: *Hail McGillicuddy!*

When the broken remembrance of things past and the wild fear of things to come weighed too heavily upon me, I thought of seeking solace in the company of Michael and Joan. I got as far as the telephone, but did not call them. A strange paralysis crippled all my faculties; I was overwhelmed with the thought that they were strangers because I was a stranger in a strange land.

What did I really know about Michael? I had idealized him because I wanted to idealize America. I knew he had faults, as America had faults, but I could never remember what they were; for to realize there were flaws in either my new friend or my new country was to realize there is no respite anywhere; wherever we go, whatever we do, life is a continuing fight without any shelters of perfection; in the surrounding world and in the heart of man himself, good must battle evil for every inch of the ground and there is no quarter.

As for Joan, the less I thought of her the better. In this new life, she was the only woman I saw frequently. That might lead to complications and it was my business to remember I was an older man with a great deal of life behind me, a refugee, an alien; and she was young, with everything before her, and probably not at all the Patient Griselda my aching fantasy painted her.

One night Michael phoned me and said:

"What are you doing Saturday night for dinner?"

"I'm free."

"Okay. Come at seven. Joan's a swell cook. And I've got some great news for you."

"Yes?"

"I want you to meet a friend of my father's. Professor Dennis. He's head of the history department at a small California college. Does that mean anything to you?"

"I feel stupid tonight. What are you driving at? You mean . . .?"

"What's the matter with you, Paul! Of course I mean. I've sold Professor Dennis a bill of goods. He knows you're a historian with a fine academic record and if he likes you, you can teach again."

My frozen heart melted into a flood of happiness. My own work again—and in America!

"Thanks, Michael," I said. "I'll be glad to come."

"Seven sharp," he said. "You're lucky to get this opportunity, Paul. Dennis leaves for California on the midnight train, and he may not come east for another ten years."

"I'll be there," I said.

Saturday night I was shaved and dressed by six-thirty, ready to leave for the Gordon's. But the moment I started for the door of

my room, all my feelings became unnerved. I could not open the door ; I could not move. Then a wild panic seized me, and a tumult of fragments from the past and fears for the future burst through my being like a raging flood of shapeless fire. I went back slowly to my desk and slumped into the chair, hoping the panic would subside. It did, only to give way to that frightful suspension of thought and feeling where you don't know what you believe or want except immediate painless extinction.

I did not turn on the light. In the meaningless darkness I heard the clock murdering time. Then I heard the phone ringing stubbornly downstairs. It stopped, and my landlady's voice cried out of the silence :

"Mr. Schuman . . . telephone!"

I did not move, and in the long silence which followed I faced my guilt. Michael, Joan and a stranger were waiting for me ; opportunity was waiting. I was here in America at last ; I was safe ; I had at last real work to do, my own work, and I was unable to do it, and whom could I blame ? Somewhere the flaw was in my own heart which past experience had congealed till it could not respond decently to America's generous welcome. Vanity made me want to conceal my wounds, to turn down gifts. Many of us were like that in those days, but I could not think of them. I could not even think of myself. I could only sit amidst the unyielding darkness of my mind which flowed and melted into the surrounding darkness of the night seeking refuge in the nirvana of blind resistance.

Later the phone rang again and the landlady's voice came up the stairs calling my name several times. I did not move and did not answer. Then suddenly I rose from the desk and stretched out on the bed and tried to think. No thoughts came, no self-reproach, no hope : only the insistence of my distorted will that I must not go, that I could not teach.

The doorbell rang. I got up, switched on the light and noticed it was almost eleven o'clock. I pressed the button without wondering who it was, knowing in a dull, remote way that the hour of judgment had come. I opened the door and heard the footsteps climbing up the stairs and at last Joan and Michael stood before me. I let them in without saying a word.

Michael, calmly smoking his pipe, looked me over from head to foot. Joan seemed agitated, her face flushed in the bright glow of electric light, her eyes on fire.

"You're alive, I see," Michael said.

The pinioned coil of my brain suddenly broke into senseless fury.

"Did you think I was dead?" I said.

"No."

Joan said quickly: "We were afraid you were ill."

"We phoned you twice," Michael said. "Were you home?"

"Yes," I said.

"Why the hell didn't you answer that phone?"

"If you've come to argue," I said, "you might as well sit down."

Joan took the armchair, but Michael remained standing.

"Why the hell didn't you come?" he said. "You missed the chance of a lifetime. Dennis was sore and I don't blame him. You put us in a spot and gypped yourself out of a swell job. You won't get another chance like that again, not from me anyway."

"He's ill," said Joan.

"Look at him," said Michael. "As fit as a fiddle and dressed to kill. Did you go out on a private bat?"

"I was home," I said.

"Are you *ill*, Paul?" said Joan.

"No."

"Why didn't you come?"

"I couldn't."

"He just doesn't like us," said Michael.

"You could have phoned us calling the date off," said Joan.

"I couldn't phone," I said.

"The professor couldn't phone," said Michael, grinning. "He comes from Vienna. They don't have telephones and don't keep dates in Vienna, and nobody punches you in the nose for this kind of standup. Lucky for you Dennis isn't here."

Michael drew his forefinger across his throat and made a rasping noise with his tongue. I resented the reference to Vienna and suddenly felt foolish.

"You don't understand," I said. "I was caught in one of those strange psychopathological states of mind which make it difficult to control one's actions or to account for them."

Michael laughed without sympathy.

"Did you hear that, sis?" he said to Joan. "The professor can't keep a simple dinner date. He can't phone. He can't take a job that's handed him on a silver platter. But he can get pompous at the drop of a hat. What was that psychopoopoological double talk? Say it again, professor."

"Let him alone, Michael," Joan said.

"Why should I let him alone?" said Michael. "Have I anything better to do? I'm launched on the new American career—helping refugees who bite the hand that feeds them. Do you remember what Dennis said? He said: Michael, you have an absolute genius for promoting European phonies."

Joan rose and turned on Michael in anger.

"Paul's no phony, and you know it," she said.

"Certainly not," said Michael blandly. "He's genuine, a pure unadulterated goof. What about the job, professor? Don't you want to do something with your life? Aren't you interested in success?"

"No," I said perversely. "I'll leave the cult of success to you Americans."

"Did you get that, sis?" Michael said. "The *cult of success*, an immortal Viennese phrase. Our European friends prefer the cult of failure. Every century they worship some magnificent failures, then make up for it by worshipping a madman whose success consists of kicking their brains out."

"You'd better go, Michael," Joan said severely.

"With pleasure," he said. "Are you staying?"

"Yes," said Joan.

"That's a good girl," Michael said. "You stay here and nurse the professor's psychopoopological wounds. I'm going to get drunk. Is there an American bar around here, professor?"

"You'll find a dozen Irish saloons on Columbus Avenue," I said.

"Irish?" Michael grinned. "That'll do. The Irish have their faults, God bless them, but they're not Continentals. Good night, Joan. Good night, professor, I'm going out to drink to the vanished glory of Viennese manners."

He closed the door behind him, and I loathed him for reminding me I was an alien. Toward Joan I turned with a heart full of gratitude.

"I hardly know how to thank you," I said.

"For what?" she said.

"For understanding."

"Don't hand me that line," she said, her face beautiful with released anger. "I didn't want to give Michael the satisfaction of admitting he's right. You didn't show up, you didn't ring us, you didn't answer our phone calls. We didn't know what to make of it, and all that time Dennis was waiting for you with a wonderful opportunity. I said you were probably ill and Michael said no. Now you're going to explain a thing or two. Are you ill?"

"No," I said.

"Then you had no business being rude to us and to Dennis. And now that I think of it, you haven't explained anything and haven't apologized for anything."

"I'm sorry," I said.

"He's sorry," Joan said. "He thinks a little polite phrase like that can square it all. Did you for a moment stop to think of the spot you put us in? No, you never do. You take everything for granted."

Her words beat in vain against the bleak rock of my depression. I resented Joan as I had resented Michael, and now began to resent the whole world in which I could no longer function, and the resentment was all the greater because in the long run there was nobody to blame, because in spite of everything the responsibility is always our own. Certainly the responsibility was mine at this moment when that full sincere apology which might have cleared up so much refused to pass my lips.

"You take Hague for granted," Joan went on. "You take Michael for granted. Everybody does things for you, and you take it all as a matter of course. But I'll be damned if I'll let you take me for granted."

"No, no, please," I said. "You've done a lot of kind things for me, and I'm grateful, believe me I am, Joan; but I don't take your friendship for granted."

"You won't get the chance," she said. "You Continentals are all alike. You think all you have to do is stretch your hand out and the girl falls."

Now I was completely bewildered.

"When did I ever stretch my hand out?" I said. "What girl fell?"

"Oh, I've listened to your hard luck stories, professor. Europe is full of calamities, but no matter what happens to you, you always manage to get a lot of nice girls."

I could not look at Joan. Slowly I sat down at my desk. You pour out your heart to a woman, reveal the secrets of your life hoping she will understand and sympathize, and in the first difference between you she converts the loveliest memories of your past into a vulgar whip of scorn and accusation.

"Haven't you anything to say?" Joan's voice demanded.

Stubborn silence held me in its grip, unable to relent, aware that its resistance was bound to infuriate Joan all the more.

"Okay, Paul," said Joan's voice behind me. "It was *not* a great pleasure to have known you. Please look me up soon, let's say in about a thousand years."

I heard the door open. The minute seemed an eon and I thought she was gone, but her voice persisted, this time quietly, with pitiless irony.

"I guess Michael was right, professor. It's your European soul. Thank God we Americans have no soul; not that kind, anyway. Good night."

The door slammed hard, and when I looked around the room was empty and with it the whole of life. I undressed, turned out the light and went to bed. I fell promptly into a heavy, restless, dreamless sleep; and when dawn came through the windows I got up to look

at the bleak trees in the yard. It was hard to remember all the stupid, painful things of the previous night, but clearly there rankled the sneer at the European soul. That was said foolishly, in anger, but it loomed even in the morning light as an abyss wider and deeper than the sea which divides the New World from the civilization which gave it birth, an abyss which now that Joan had pointed to it seemed to me forever impassable. But did she mean to assail Europe or my past? Had I been born in Duluth or Birmingham, she would have assailed my American past because she was young and because she was a woman with a streak of spitfire who knew instinctively where to hurt a man most in a quarrel. She knew nothing about Europe, but that gave her all the greater advantage: those who attack our past seldom know anything about it: they have no true picture of us, the country where we grew up, the continent whose lore fills our being, the party to which we may have belonged, the books we may have written, the things we believed with all our heart and soul, the people we loved more than life itself, the aspirations which made the present tolerable, the future alluring and real: no, they attack a myth, a mirage, some cliché they have seen in a headline or heard in the market place of prejudice, the muddy whirlpool of gossip spewed out by foes who hate us blindly; and to this fantastic shape that never was on land or sea they attach all their own fears and disappointed hopes and give it our name and say: there is your past: and all the while, more than likely, we have been searching for the same light, whatever name it bears, which draws them out of their own darkness toward the common salvation of all men in some undetermined time to come.

I dressed and started out for breakfast, and as I opened the door it came over me all in a rush: what did you do last night, you damned Viennese dreamer! How could you treat your friends like that! You behaved like a swine and have not yet had the decency to explain, to apologize.

Hastily I sat down at my desk and wrote Joan a letter into which repentance flowed freely.

"Joan, dear: can you forgive me? I was ill last night, not physically, but ill just the same, and could not keep my date with you and Michael, and could not phone and could not explain and could not apologize properly. There was absolutely no excuse for my conduct; it was shabby. And please believe me, I don't want to take anything for granted. You had every right to be angry last night, but I know it was an act of friendship on your part and on Michael's to come at all. Please forgive me and do give my apologies to Michael. I'm writing him too. I'll write Professor Dennis the moment you give me his address. I know this letter sounds silly, 'European,' but

it's the only way I can write this, and if you will be good enough to see me, perhaps we can straighten this out more simply. If you knew how I feel these days, thanks to a past you understand better than you pretend to, you would at least know that my conduct had nothing to do with my feelings for you and Michael. I like you both and appreciate your friendship more than I can say, and nothing would make me happier than to deserve it forever."

I posted the letter on my way to Kosta the Greek's. After breakfast, I went home and when I opened the door into the hallway, the telephone began to ring. I lifted the receiver and said:

"Hello."

"Paul?" said Joan's voice.

"Joan . . . I just mailed you a letter."

"You did? Please—don't tell me what it says. I want to read it as a surprise. I called to apologize."

"What have you to apologize for? It's I who must apologize. I acted very badly last night."

"You did, but that was no excuse for saying what I said. I spent a bad night worrying about it. I hurt you, Paul. I'm sorry."

"It was entirely my fault," I said. "Please forgive me. Michael was right. It was something psychopoopological."

Her laughter was pleasant.

"Michael is worried about you, too," she said. "He agrees you're probably ill. Paul, won't you see a doctor? I know a good one."

"Let's discuss that at dinner," I said. "How about tonight?"

"That'll be grand. Shall I ask Michael, too?"

"By all means. He is entitled to an explanation."

But I never made that explanation. When I took Joan and Michael to dinner at the Hickory House, they were very gay and friendly, and pretended nothing had ever gone wrong between us; and never once afterward did they refer to that fantastic night on which my gathering breakdown had injured their pride and shattered an opportunity to teach in California. I was so happy to resume my friendship with them, and to feel once more as if I belonged in this new land, that I was able to evade reality on another basis, to pretend that all was irrevocably, endlessly well with the world.

But the following Sunday reality crashed through all these evasions with overwhelming force. It was noon. Outside the weather was clear; the sun flooded my room with bright winter light. I was at my desk reading Gibbon and listening to a symphony on the radio. Suddenly the music stopped and the tumultuous world tumbled into my refuge. The announcer came on with the sensational news. In

spite of all I had experienced, read and thought, it still seemed incredible: these things always seemed incredible: yet it was a fact: the day had come.

I went out into the street and mingled with people in drugstores, bars, restaurants. At first they said simply: well, it's here. Then they said: the yellow bastards: I'd like to tear them limb from limb: we'll kick their teeth in.

I phoned Hague and he asked me to come over right away. His house was full of people in a great state of turmoil. I was myself too excited to remember more than a few snatches of the conversation. Hague said it was the first time in its history America had been attacked this way. Michael Gordon said the great moment had come and now the Axis would have a real fight on its hands. Joan said it was dreadful but we had to fight and win. The radio was kept going all the time. Everyone was stirred by the President's order to the army and navy: *Fight back!* In the evening a Cabinet meeting was reported, then a session of congressional leaders, then the announcers said the President had finished the first draft of his message.

America was at war.

For me it was hard to grasp even the following day when I sat at my radio endlessly listening for every scrap of news. But through the fog which enveloped my spirit the full meaning came at last when I heard the President: Yesterday, December 7, 1941—a date which will live in infamy—the United States was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan: always will our whole nation remember the character of the onslaught against us: no matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people in their righteous might will win through to absolute victory: we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost but will make it very certain that this form of treachery shall never again endanger us: we will gain the inevitable triumph, so help us God. Then the President's deeply moving voice came over the radio announcing the nation's grim decision: I ask that the Congress declare a state of war: and without realizing at first what I was doing I began to weep in the total loneliness of my room, and for a flash my heart woke from its dogmatic slumber and felt the greatness of the hour and of the man who had just spoken its meaning to the world and of the nation which rallied behind him to defend its shores and freedom, and of the slow gathering of mankind from all quarters of the globe to strike in unison against the monster relentlessly devouring the vitals of human existence: I wept because war is terrible beyond words: because the enemy had inflicted it upon the good men and women of the earth:

because when righteous it must be fought without respite or mercy to the last moment when the foe collapses and justice triumphs: because the American people did not recoil from the stupendous task fate had imposed upon them: because their great leader did not hesitate for a split second to order imperative resistance: because now, with this free and mighty people in the fray, the scales were at last tipped heavily in favor of mankind's liberation: and I wept too because in this momentous upsurge I was an outsider, sick, lost, unable to contribute anything in this sacred universal cause.

Next day I went down to the Federal Building on Christopher Street and took out my first papers as citizen of the United States.

You know far more about America at war than I do, doctor, so I'll go on to the events which evoked my third vision and thereby brought me to your office for analysis.

In the hectic weeks which followed the outbreak of war, Michael Gordon announced his intention of quitting his job with Hague and joining one of the information agencies the government was setting up. I was present the evening Hague tried to dissuade him. We dined with the Hagues in a night club and the argument had to shift as well as it could between rounds of boogy-woogy. Beatrice Hague watched the floor show and refused to take sides in the dispute. Joan, lovelier than ever in a simple black evening gown, listened quietly and with great interest. Hague insisted Michael was doing an important job on the publications and if he was impatient to fight the Axis more directly all he had to do was to wait for the draft board to call him in due time; besides, taking the government job would cut his income in half and he ought to be fair to his aged parents in California and to Joan.

"I'll take care of myself," Joan said, "and between us Michael and I will take care of our parents."

Hague offered Michael a raise, but the writer said he wasn't interested in money.

"Don't you want the Axis licked?" he asked Hague, smiling.

"You can lick the Axis just as well working with me," said Hague.

"I feel I can do it better working for the government," Michael said. "It's a kind of personal thing with me, I started something in Spain and I'd like to finish it."

Hague relented. He apologized for being selfish and said he had been swayed by his desire to keep Michael with him. Later, when we were drinking nightcaps at his house, he gave the young writer letters of introduction to the heads of various departments of the federal information committee in New York.

"You can be more useful here than in Washington," Hague said.

"I don't care where I work," Michael said, "as long as it's for the same purpose."

"It will be nice to have you here," I said.

Joan gave me a grateful look.

Before the week was over, Michael was working with the information committee in New York. Before another week was over, his name was on the front page of every newspaper in the country and on every radio newscast. The campaign against him was launched on the floor of the Senate by Owen Cope and picked up by all editorial writers fighting the New Deal and the war even in this tremendous crisis of America's existence. The campaign dragged on through December. Publicly, widely and unscrupulously, Senator Cope accused Michael of being one of the chief radical intellectuals in this country; he raked up the young writer's record in the Spanish civil war to show that in fighting for the people's republic against Franco, Mussolini and Hitler he had practically betrayed America. The senator also offered to show that in the past decade Michael had had no less than seventy-five connections with radical organizations of various kinds.

Michael issued a statement to the press denying any and all connections with radical organizations and insisting upon his right under the Constitution to belong to any or all of them if he wanted to. At a conference in Hague's library at which Michael, Joan and I were present, Hague said it would have been smarter if Michael had omitted the second part of his statement.

"You should have left the Bill of Rights completely out of it," Hague said. "It would have been more effective to concentrate on the simple fact that Owen Cope's charges are unfounded."

Hague's anxiety for our young friend was confirmed in the next few days. The antiwar elements, now masquerading as superpatriots protecting the machinery and purity of national defense, demanded that Michael resign at once.

The last day of December was a dark one for me. I did not move out of the house until dusk. Then I dined alone at Kosta the Greek's lunch counter on Columbus Avenue and tried to screw up my courage to attend Hague's New Year's Eve party.

Hague was my oldest friend and he was kind enough to say that the party was partly in celebration of my birthday. It was to mark another event, too. Though he had carefully kept it from the newspapers, I knew Hague was flying the next day to England. From there he was going to Russia, one of the few American editors privi-

leged to cover a war upon whose outcome the future of the world depended so much.

I had to go and did not want to go. I wanted to be alone with bitter thoughts about a past I had not yet outlived because I felt I was not alive.

I crossed Central Park in a bus, stepped into a bar somewhere off the East Sixties and began drinking. You know I'm not much of a drinker, doctor, but that New Year's Eve I developed an unexpected capacity for straight Scotch.

By the time I reached Hague's house it was ten o'clock and I was feeling synthetically cheerful. I greeted Hague and Beatrice and went into the nursery to wish a happy new year to a little sleeping beauty named Judy.

Back in the immense living room the guests formed a crowd which stretched from wall to wall. Everybody seemed to be standing with a drink in his hand. Most people wore evening clothes, though I could see Michael seated on one of the window sills in his business suit. He was talking to a very pretty girl. I picked up a Scotch highball from the long oak table and went off into a corner by myself. Somehow Hague located me there and insisted on bringing people over for introductions. That was when I met you, doctor.

"Foster," Hague said, "meet my good friend Paul Schuman: this is Dr. Foster, Paul, the famous psychoanalyst."

You said how do you do and I said how do you do and you went off with Hague. The room was getting very warm, the babble of the vast crowd meaningless. I downed a straight Scotch, then made myself a tall one. I knew where the library was downstairs and started for it.

"Oh, there you are!" Joan's voice said from the crowd.

She was beside me now, holding my arm.

"I want you to meet Dr. Foster," she said. "He's over there talking to Michael."

"I've met him," I said.

"Weren't you impressed?"

"I'm not being impressed tonight."

"I've got bad news for you, Paul."

"The Milton piece came back again."

"Yes."

"I'm not surprised. If anybody wanted to surprise me, they'd have to print it."

"I'm sorry, Paul."

"I'll survive," I said. "See you later."

"Where are you going?"

"Must you know everything?"

"I know," Joan laughed pleasantly. "I've been watching you. You're drinking too much."

"You're wrong," I said. "I'm going to the library. Alone."

She turned her head quickly and walked away. I felt sorry but there was nothing to be done about it. Two persons were struggling inside me for mastery, and this was Mr. Hyde's field day.

I went downstairs, found a bottle of Scotch on the dining-room table and took it into the library. It was quiet there. I lit a pipe, took a long swig of highball and settled down in one of the armchairs near the fireplace.

"Here's the rascal," Hague's voice said.

He was standing in the doorway with Joan. They came in and sat down on the green sofa facing me.

"Now what's all this about?" Hague said.

Joan opened her pocketbook, took out my Milton essay and handed it to Hague.

"I think your papers can use this," she said. "Please read it."

"Now?" said Hague.

"Now. You'll be in England tomorrow night."

"Okay," said Hague.

He read the Milton essay in silence, then looked up at me smiling and said:

"It's a swell piece, Paul."

"I'm glad you like it," I said.

"Unfortunately," Hague said, "my papers have no room for literature these days. I'm concentrating wholly on the war as we all should."

"You're right," I said.

I took the manuscript and put it in my pocket. Hague turned to me with a strange look, then to Joan, saying:

"Where's Michael?"

"I saw him upstairs," Joan said.

"Please call him like a good girl."

As Joan went out she gave me a warm smile. Hague lit a cigar and handed me one.

"If I ask you a question," I said, "will you get angry?"

"Why should I?" said Hague. "Shoot."

"Can you save Michael from being fired?"

"He isn't being fired. He's being forced to resign."

"Isn't there some way of stopping that?"

"What can I do?" said Hague. "If he were a real radical of some consequence with a big following he wouldn't have taken the job in the first place. Michael took the job and he's no radical. He's a swell guy; I like him, and I'm helpless. He never did a thing and he's

small fry and of no account politically. The wolves are howling now; they must be thrown somebody. Poor Michael is elected, and there's nothing to be done about it. When you're nobody, nobody can help you."

"Does Michael understand all this?" I said.

"Perfectly."

"How nice," I said, and thought: in politics there is no friendship, truth or justice: everything moves to the laws of power alone and you're rapidly getting drunk.

For a moment Hague looked at me reflectively through his cigar smoke, then he said softly:

"I'm flying to England tomorrow."

"So you've told me."

"Then to Russia."

"Congratulations," I said.

"Paul, America is in this war to the finish."

"Naturally."

"The world can't be half slave, half free. The democracies are going to win. But it's going to be a long, hard fight. The enemy is ruthless and the stakes are supreme."

"Why do you tell me this?" I said. "I've known it for years."

"Exactly," said Hague. "And that's what I want to talk to you about. I'm worried about you."

He said this so quietly and kindly that I was ready to listen.

"I've known you for twenty years," said Hague, "and I think the world of you, but for some time you haven't been yourself. You ought to be useful in this crisis, and all you do is mope in your room, brooding over things that can't be half as important as the war. You **can** talk frankly to me, Paul. What's wrong?"

I did not answer.

"You've gone through plenty," Hague said. "But we all have tragedies to bear, and it's no tribute to those we love to bury ourselves in dark moods."

He rose from the sofa, went to the window and looked out into the bare garden.

"Do you know what I think is eating you, Paul?" he said.

"All right, tell me."

"You're an absolutist. We all grew up in the tremendous expectations of the century. They didn't pan out. But they weren't a total failure, either. That is, they won't be if we destroy the Axis and win the war. But you refuse the half-loaves history offers us. You demand the complete fulfillment of the original contract which we drew up in the romantic hopes of youth but which history never signed. And now your unreconstructed heart complains not that the wicked

are wicked but that the good aren't good enough. You're still set on the pure, the beautiful, the free. This makes you incapable of seeing the great realistic possibilities which lie beyond victory, and that's why you can't contribute your share toward victory."

"I think I see all that," I said.

"Sure, your mind sees it," said Hague. "But there's a part of you, deep down in your complex heart, which sabotages your best insights and intentions. Why don't you get rid of that fifth columnist in your soul?"

"How?" I said.

He faced me squarely and the friendship of all these years lit his eyes. Without saying a word, doctor, he placed on the arm of my chair a visiting card bearing your name, address and phone number.

"That won't do any good," I said, putting the card in my pocket.

"I know how you feel about it," Hague said kindly. "We'll see what time will do."

At this moment Joan and Michael came in.

"Ah, here they are," said Hague. "Sit down, everybody."

"Hello, Paul," said Michael. "Where have you been since Christmas?"

"He's been hiding from us," said Joan, smiling.

Michael sat down next to Hague on the sofa, and Joan in a chair opposite mine. Turning to Michael, Hague said:

"So Cope insists you resign. What do you plan to do, Michael?"

"I'm going to resign," said Michael.

"Why don't you fight?" I said.

"It's not easy," Michael said. "Senator Cope has used every trick in the Nazi repertoire. He claims I was a member of organizations whose names I've forgotten or never heard, and to which I certainly never belonged. He says I'm disloyal to the country which my ancestors helped to found."

"That's exactly the way the Nazis operate where I come from," I said. "Why should you let Senator Cope get away with it?"

"If we were at peace," said Michael, "I'd fight like hell. But we're at war and that war must be won at every sacrifice. The committee for which I've been working has been doing fine work. I don't want that work hampered by charges of radicalism no matter how phony."

"I guess you'd better resign," said Hague. "After all, Owen Cope has a real case against you."

"Has he now?" said Joan earnestly.

"Sure," Hague said. "Michael's entire life testifies to a sincere and loyal belief in the American principle of government of, by and

for the people. That automatically makes him a dangerous fellow from where Cope stands. Besides, Michael has all along favored the war against the Axis which Senator Cope is still sabotaging."

"You're glad Michael is resigning," said Joan. "You think you can get him back to your papers."

"I never thought of that," said Hague with a mischievous smile. "But now that you mention it. . . ."

"We'll talk about that later," said Michael. "Why don't you get back to your party? Your guests miss you and Beatrice has been looking for you."

"He wants to be alone with Paul," said Joan.

Hague took her by the arm and they went up to the living room, I made drinks for Michael and myself.

"Too bad Cope forced you out," I said.

"He can't stop me from being useful in other ways," said Michael.

"Are you going back to Hague's papers?"

"No. I'll tell you what I'm going to do. But you must promise not to say a word to anybody, not even Joan or Hague. I'll tell them myself when I'm ready."

"It's a bargain," I said.

"I'm enlisting in the army."

"Are you getting a commission?"

"After Cope's dirty work? Not a chance. But a couple of million pretty good people are going to be buck privates. If it's good enough for them, it's good enough for me."

"You're all right," I said, raising my glass. "Here's luck."

We clinked glasses and drank.

"I wish I had the time to know you better," Michael said. "Did I tell you that you started me off on a poem?"

"No."

"It's a fact." He took two sheets of paper out of his pocket and handed them to me. "Read this when you get a chance, I'll appreciate it."

"I will."

"A literary monthly is going to print it."

"You're lucky."

"How about coming up?" he said. "Joan will miss you."

"I'd rather stay here."

"Okay," said Michael. "See you later upstairs."

Five minutes after he left the library a great roar filled the world. The guests upstairs were shouting *Happy New Year!* and from the outside came the hooting of horns, the clang of cowbells and the explosion of gay voices. A new year for me and for the world. It was my birthday. How old was I? Never mind. The less

said about that, the better. I drank another straight Scotch, went into the hallway, found my hat and coat and slipped out into the first night of this year. I waved to several passing cabs; they were crowded and did not stop. The door of Hague's house opened and Joan came out in her evening wraps. Her face looked very lovely under the white shawl.

"I might have known it," she said reproachfully. "Where are you going, Paul?"

"Home."

"Do you think it's nice to go off without wishing us a happy new year?"

"Happy New Year," I said.

"And you didn't say good-bye to Hague."

"I'm terribly sorry," I said, "I feel rotten."

"I know," she said sympathetically. "Let's go into that drug-store on the corner. You can phone your explanations to Hague."

"I can't talk to anybody," I said. "I'm too depressed."

"Paul, you've simply got to phone Hague. That's the least you can do."

"You're right," I said. "Thanks."

We went into the drugstore and I phoned Hague. He said he understood and wished me all the luck in the world for the coming year. I wished him success in England and Russia and asked him to transmit my excuses and good wishes to Beatrice.

Joan called a cab and we drove to my place. She kept the taxi waiting and we said good night on the doorstep.

"Will you promise me something?" she said.

"What is it?"

"Phone me tomorrow morning at ten. I want to know you're all right."

"I promise."

"Happy New Year, Paul," she said. "I hope nineteen-forty-two brings you release, success and happiness."

She leaned over and kissed me, and again the warmth of her lips frightened me.

"I owe you that one," she said.

She kissed me again.

"And this time," she said, "I hope *you* won't misunderstand."

"What is there to misunderstand?" I said.

"Oh, lots!" she said.

She turned and ran down the steps into the taxi which vanished with her into the new year.

In the refuge of my room I did not want to think of what had just happened. It wasn't for me. The holiday atmosphere which

enveloped the city depressed me, too. I did not like facing another birthday or another year of despair. There was nothing else I saw ahead.

I undressed, looked around for a book to read, picked up Spinoza and crawled into bed. I began to read that part where the great philosopher says that life and experience lead man to conceive a human nature more perfect than his own and to seek the means that will lead him to such perfection; but I was too disturbed in spirit to follow that train of thought, and when Spinoza began to speak of the medicine of the mind I became irritated and closed the book.

Then I remembered Michael's poem, got it out of my coat pocket and went back to bed. Oh, yes, doctor: I was full of envy that he was able to write freely and able to get his writing published, and I was glad for him, too.

My head was whirling with Scotch and melancholy and I had some difficulty following his poem. It was called *The Future Determines the Past*, and was apparently based on various remarks I had made in conversation with Joan and Michael. The poem ran something like this: These dead shall fade from space and memory: their names shall be forgotten and their number: their monuments shall crumble, too: the grass will grow over illegible inscriptions: the race alone shall be remembered: the land's name, like a legend, shall in the endless vaults of time join Carthage, Bithynia, the sound of Ashur: time's daughter, memory, shall choose, aloof from good and evil, some names enormous in their power to join the heroes and the poets of the world: conquerors and thinkers of our age shall have a second life in time: the others fade and fade forever: their fathers died a quiet death at home: they die in agony on battlefields and die forever: the land shall win, the cause will triumph: at one caesura flags will fill the sky, the crowds cheer, the statesmen will make speeches: and you will not be there: O you will fight: you will struggle against the greatest foe, more bitter than alien armies, more terrible than death: frightful oblivion, not to live in time: fight, then: who shall blame you? who can help you? where is salvation but within the law? Destroying or creating, giants shape the years, but not alone: yes, yes, this is where you are: you too create, giving life endless fruitfulness: you fill the realms of time. Take, then, the proffered gift: to be aware of other times and lands, the alternation of tranquillity and pain: hatred, surging over hope, engenders hope: and over ruined towns and vanished men, the generations come to walk in joy. Cast up accounts: once, long ago, when you were singing on a peaceful shore, did you remember your forefathers' travail? Your sons will also sing; and singing will

forget your battles, the sanguinary midwives of their world. Forget and yet remember! The music halts but never ceases: the line of builders empties and renews itself: behold them, moving along time's horizon: yourself anonymous, immortal, see your heirs resolving mysteries which oppress their world, ordering the chaos which first spawned us, giving body to the evolving dream: look at the vista and be glad: bless the illumination which is man's, O animal unique and loftiest of creatures! Remember and foresee: for that awareness, that sublime swift vision, here in its glory and now gone to come again, shall give you consanguinity with time.

For all its shortcomings, the poem's effect upon me at that moment was tremendous. My mind began to spin violently, then suddenly became very clear. It stopped thinking of Michael and his poem and began to swim among images of the past, experienced and read, which tumbled over each other in senseless profusion until they focused on the prison courtyard where, awaiting my own death, I saw Kurt standing upon the scaffold uttering vast hopes I could not hear.

The whole world seemed to cry out with agony and despair. My senses became numb with old doubts about man's endless struggle for wisdom and virtue. And in that aching fragment of time the room filled with harmonies of the *Prelude, Chorale and Fugue*, an intense white light beat upon the wall opposite and, with all the relentless tyranny of a past whose chains I wanted and could not shatter forever, the third vision appeared to haunt this turbulent night.

8

For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. . . . For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face. . . . And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

—I Corinthians.

I

(Noon. A humble lodging on the outskirts of Constantinople. Close-up of a hand writing slowly on parchment; then of the manuscript's title: "A Historic Tableau of the Progress of Faith, Hope and Charity"; finally a close-up of the hand inscribing firmly: "all men are equal not in capacity but in value." Now the man behind the hand appears. Barefoot, alone, dressed in the poor tunic of an anchorite, Eusebius is seated at a simple wooden table working on the parchment whose twentieth century adventures have already been recounted. He is very old; his long hair is all white; his face, wrinkled with age, wind and sun, is covered with a white beard; only the blue eyes retain the energy of youth, and they shine with great candor and expectation. As Eusebius pores over his spiritual testament, the scene is suffused with an indescribable feeling about the time in which it takes place. This is at once vague and precise. The action moves not among the hours of a day but along vistas of an era spanning decades compressed into the metaphor of a moment: from noon to dusk. At present the noonlight pouring in through the open door is gray; heavy clouds are visible in the sky. Eusebius puts down his manuscript, rises, paces up and down the room in antique soliloquy.)

EUSEBIUS: The hardest part comes now. They will believe everything but this. It will be easy for them to understand my temptations and agonies in the desert. Monk, cenobite and anchorite have made the world familiar with the saint's resistance to the devil: the prolonged fasting, solitude, joylessness and obscurity of the exile anathematized by old companions. Oh, how the seven deadly sins assailed me in relentless nights of stars and sand, luring me with wild visions of orgies, luxuries and abominations: heresiarchs came in apparition to corrupt my soul: martyrs mocked their own in-

sincere bigotry: Oriental magicians, scorning the True Faith, terminated lives of holiness by self-cremation: Satan haunted me as all the thaumaturgists vaunting themselves above Christ: ancient gods emerged from cruel mists of tortured fancy to reclaim the world: lust and death inspired me with sickly desires to gorge my senses and die by my own hand: a phantasmagoria of monsters leaped from the walls of imaginary temples to vex me with insoluble riddles of matter and idea. Yes, all this will be clear to them. But how explain the hiatus of grace postponed? I knelt in prayer days and nights on end but the redeeming face of Christ did not appear: my delirious longing to unite with the spirit of universal being burned unslaked within my lacerated heart. I left the desert, came to this new capital of the empire, my soul heavy with a task mysteriously imposed upon it: to write everything down for other generations blessed with the justice of distance in time. I did not wish it, but the summons was inexorable: my eyes which have seen so much good and evil wept tears of wonder and release: my hand wrote swiftly as the heart echoed Jeremiah: Ah, Lord God! behold I cannot speak, for I am a child: but the Lord said unto me: say not I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak: be not afraid of their faces, for I am with thee to deliver thee. . . . So I have been writing for days, and now comes the hardest, the most incredible part of all. Be with me, O Lord! guide me in the ways of truth.

(Eusebius resumes his seat at the wooden table and begins to write his manuscript once more. A shadow appears in the open doorway. An old man walks in, followed by two soldiers in armor carrying swords and shields: they are full of brawn and youth; they take their places in the doorway. The old man who has just entered has a clean-shaven, crafty face, lined with conflicting furrows of success, indulgence and disappointment; his clothes are elegant, costly; the dagger at his belt reposes in a jeweled scabbard; he is completely bald. Eusebius looks up at him without surprise.)

EUSEBIUS: Welcome, stranger: may heaven bless you.

OLD MAN: Good afternoon, Eusebius.

EUSEBIUS: You know me?

OLD MAN: Don't you recognize me? I am your old friend Basil.

EUSEBIUS (*gently*): Greetings, Basil. May Christ forgive us all. Time has truly transformed you. But then I am not the same, either.

BASIL: The years spare nobody. I come on an unpleasant errand, my friend. Reports of your return have reached the capital. I have been sent to arrest you in Caesar's name.

EUSEBIUS: What have I done? I've lived so long in desert solitude, I have lost all understanding of the empire's ways.

BASIL: The empire, too, has changed. Caesar bows to Christ; the palace avows the church which pronounces benedictions upon the palace.

EUSEBIUS: Praised be the Lord!

BASIL: Do you grasp your position now? We arrest you under imperial law as a heretic who bears the stigma of excommunication.

EUSEBIUS: Alas! won't you let me pass my last years in peace? But it doesn't matter: everything is bearable since truth has triumphed.

BASIL: You haven't changed, after all. You are still naïve.

EUSEBIUS: For years I have seen nothing but sun, sand and wild visions; heard nothing but the howling of winds, jackals and temptations; anathema weighed heavy upon my head, exclusion upon my heart; cenobite communities barred me; Satan tormented me with frightful enticements; I longed for redemption and home, prayed for heavenly grace and the termination of exile. And now, returning at last to the world, you arrest me with the same breath which announces that the cross glows high above the empire, that Caesar walks in the eternal light. How shall I not be glad? how not puzzled?

BASIL: I can explain all this, for I am now an official of the law courts. I repeat: since the True Faith is the empire's creed, it seals with secular power the church's condemnation of your heresies. You have been cast out from the bosom of the Holy Mother: now the state will examine your conduct under imperial law.

EUSEBIUS: Desert loneliness has taught me much: my heart is calm: the state will see that nothing separates me from the church. But first I must see Polyclitus.

BASIL: Polyclitus? He perished long ago, killed in a brawl with Arians.

EUSEBIUS (*his eyes filling with tears of grief*): Alas, Polyclitus, noblest of men, most beloved of friends, peace to your soul! Has it come to this, Basil, that heretics kill a bishop?

BASIL: And vice versa.

EUSEBIUS: You are cynical. Your eyes and voice lack faith.

BASIL: If I could safely be a pagan now, I'd gladly return to the way of our grandfathers. But why tempt death? When in Rome . . . or in Constantinople . . .

EUSEBIUS: Heaven help you, Basil! What has seared your heart with sin?

BASIL: Sin? You're talking superstition!

EUSEBIUS: Is it superstition for you now, the one true creed for which you wrecked my life?

(Basil hesitates, carefully considering his reply. The two young soldiers guarding the doorway scan the sky impatiently.)

FIRST SOLDIER: Looks like rain.

SECOND SOLDIER: Yeah. But it's a long way off.

FIRST SOLDIER: The old men are going to gab forever. We'll be caught in the rain sure as hell.

SECOND SOLDIER: No, we've got plenty of time. It won't rain till midnight.

FIRST SOLDIER: There's one good thing. If we do get caught in a storm, the old men will get wetter than we.

(They both laugh.)

BASIL: That day was fatal to my aspirations on which the Emperor saw the flaming cross in heaven proclaim above the battle that by this sign he would conquer. As long as our creed was hounded, I could hope to rise within its ranks to highest honors. But official creeds aggravate all rivalries. The richest, ablest nobles now hold church office, crowding out amateurs like me. It's been a bitter blow: from deacon to law-court attendant is quite a fall.

EUSEBIUS: How can you think of such things or barter your immortal soul in revenge for a mess of pottage denied you?

BASIL: You wouldn't talk that way if you knew what has really happened. True, church and empire have joined hands; but while Christ is thrown a crumb, Caesar takes all. The Augustus believes the time has come for all society to be remodeled by the fiat of despotic authority. It is now established undisguised that the will of the Emperor, in whatever form expressed, is the sole foundation of law. Yes, the cross has been planted in the Coliseum; the bones of martyrs molder in the Pantheon; Vesta's temples are consecrated to the Holy Virgin; pagan philosophy sustains church dogma; but our supreme ruler unites within himself the empire of Caesar and the church of Christ in a spirit of absolute authority which casts its shadow into the next thousand years.

EUSEBIUS: Your starved ambition distorts the world, Basil.

BASIL: You don't believe me? Then I'll tell you more. During your desert exile we had a great Pope who mirrored the ways of Constantine and gave the church its twin visage to the empire. It was Siricius who issued the first papal decretal on discipline for the Spanish church, and the first to use, even more haughtily than Victor or Stephen, the arrogant language of Roman dominion founded on the supposed succession of St. Peter. A few people have begun to ask: who is head of the church, Peter or Christ? You can imagine how Siricius got along with the saints: he simply loathed Jerome! As for our saints, you have no idea how adroit some of them have

become in the mysteries of practical politics. Do you know the famous declaration St. Chrysostom made while you were away wrestling with the devil? He said: it is often necessary to deceive, and by this art to achieve great ends: by too great rigidity one may positively injure a friend!

EUSEBIUS (*kneeling, raises his eyes to heaven*): Merciful God, have pity upon me: forgive my sins: open Basil's eyes to the true light. (*Rises*) Your doubts are monstrous, Basil!

BASIL: Come, come, Eusebius, don't be a hypocrite! You once had doubts yourself.

EUSEBIUS: These never! In the darkest hour of temptation my heart never succumbed to that continual doubt whose core is weakness, whose sole condition is barren confusion seeking to appear wise.

BASIL: I cannot doubt the evidence of my senses. Do you know how our most Christian emperor died at Aquyrion? He finally was baptized in the faith by which he ruled! Then, at his own last request, his corpse was transported here to the capital destined to preserve his name and memory: the body was adorned with vain symbols of greatness, purple and diadem: was deposited on a golden bed in one of the palace apartments which for that purpose had been splendidly furnished and illuminated, in order, I suppose, to impress upon the world the Christian virtues of poverty and humility: the forms of the imperial court were strictly maintained: every day, at the appointed hours, the principal officers of the state, the army and the household, approaching the deceased person of their sovereign with bended knees and composed countenance, offered their respectful homage as if he had been alive. Constantine alone, by the peculiar indulgence of heaven, reigned after his death.

EUSEBIUS (*drawing his hand across his eyes in bewilderment*): No, no, Basil! You must not talk like that!

BASIL (*relentlessly*): After Caesar's death, they somehow found his will donating immense properties to the church. They say it's a forgery. Recently I went in secret to consult a pagan oracle. Would you believe it, Eusebius? Fortune's wheel has turned completely: it's now the pagans who hide in catacombs, so to speak. The priestess presiding over the oracle asked me if I would like to hear a message from the distant future. She took me to a surreptitious grove which exhaled a voice saying in a strange bastard Latin that yet was beautiful: Ah, Constantine, of how much ill was cause not thy conversion but those rich domains that the first wealthy Pope received of thee!

EUSEBIUS (*surveying Basil from head to foot with incredulous eyes*): What makes you talk like this? How can you damn your soul through all eternity?

BASIL (*laughing*): Don't speak to me of the soul. I have changed my views on that, too. Men got along very well without a soul, that sheer invention of the Faith. In the old days we used to know savagery, now we shall know madness.

EUSEBIUS: Ah, the soul is too much for you. . . . Did you ever confide these terrible doubts and blasphemies to Polyclitus?

BASIL: Why should I? He was a superstitious fool, too. I maintain that discretion and pretense without which life nowadays is impossible: I go to the confessional regularly but keep my thoughts to myself.

EUSEBIUS: Strange: you who cast me into outer darkness no longer believe, while I who suffered unjustly do believe.

BASIL: Then you ought to get along well with a man who will judge you this afternoon—Titus.

EUSEBIUS: He, too, has seen the great light? Thank God!

BASIL: Don't get drunk on futile hopes. Titus is orthodox, you heretical, and law is law. Come, let's go to the courtroom. Titus is waiting for you. No creed can change the ways of a magistrate: his business is not to be kind but to enforce the statutes.

EUSEBIUS: What Titus does to me is trivial: my heart sings hosannas that he who once hounded the faithful is now within their ranks.

BASIL: My advice is: don't let him hear your heart singing. Are you afraid to go with me to the law palace?

EUSEBIUS: I would go even if there were as many devils there as tiles on the house roofs.

BASIL: Come, then: the judge is waiting.

(*He starts for the door, followed by Eusebius. The two soldiers stiffen to attention: they smile with pleasure to get this chore done at last. In the doorway Eusebius suddenly stops.*)

EUSEBIUS: Excuse me a moment. I have forgotten something.

(*He goes back and picks up his manuscript. Basil seizes it rudely from his hand and glances at its contents.*)

BASIL: What's this?

EUSEBIUS: A confession of faith, an appeal to the future.

BASIL: The style is rather lurid.

EUSEBIUS (*smiling*): No doubt: it's a kind of evangel-poem of comrades and of love: it says the whole earth and the stars in the sky are for religion's sake.

BASIL (*severely*): Look here, Eusebius: you've always been a fool. Do you want to burn at the stake? Never forget you're a heretic forbidden all appeal. If Judge Titus ever sees this, all the stars and archangels in heaven won't be able to help you. I injured you once: allow me to save you now.

(He whips out his dagger, slashes the parchment in three places, throws it on the floor. A close-up shows the manuscript almost as tattered as it will appear in Vienna's archives sixteen centuries later.)

EUSEBIUS (*sadly*): And I wanted to justify the ways of God to man.

BASIL: God doesn't need your help. You'll be lucky if you can justify your own ways to Titus. In that case, you'll get off with a light prison sentence pro forma. Let's go. *(The soldiers exit first; Eusebius follows; Basil brings up the rear. Suddenly Basil stops, strikes his forehead with the palm of his hand: a close-up shows his face absolutely immobile, but his voice is heard as he speaks to himself.)* What am I doing? Age has muddled my political sagacity: my enemy has written a book, and I am crazy enough to leave it behind!

(Silently Basil goes back to the room, lifts the tattered parchment from the floor and conceals it in his tunic. They all leave.)

2

(The courtroom. Judge Titus sits on the tribunal glancing casually through records. A large crucifix hangs on the wall behind him. Titus, also, has grown very old: his close-cropped hair is white, his features wrinkled: but there is an air of great vigor about him. He looks up smiling as Basil enters followed by the aged Eusebius, who now takes his station humbly before the tribunal. Basil sits down at a near-by table and begins to perform his lifelong task of noting down what other people say. A vast crowd fills the courtroom: its whispers carry the name of Eusebius, lost for many years to the world and now unknown to most people.)

JUDGE: Welcome home, Eusebius, and forgive this unpleasant business. What can one do? The empire is Christian, you are a heretic and I am a judge.

EUSEBIUS: Heaven's blessings upon you, Titus. You have seen the true light which fills the world: nothing else matters.

JUDGE: Fifty years ago your case excited a great deal of attention; every sparrow twittered about it. Now everyone has forgotten about you except the authorities. We never forget.

EUSEBIUS: What is it you want of me, Titus?

JUDGE: You have been in the desert for decades. What did you do there?

EUSEBIUS: I fought temptation: I suffered: I thought.

JUDGE: Did these years of solitude show you the error of your ways?

EUSEBIUS: I am a miserable sinner who prays night and day for redemption and grace.

JUDGE: You're evading the issue. Do you still insist the essence of our faith is that all men are equal not in capacity but in value?

EUSEBIUS: I am too old now to insist at all, and who but God knows the essence of anything? Still, I believe it's a teaching never to be forgotten. And you? Now that the empire lives in the Faith, do you still see immense shadows of evil in the future?

JUDGE: My poor Eusebius, our faith is a miracle which cannot perform the miracles you ask of it. It cannot change the ways of men.

EUSEBIUS: That is just what it will do! Otherwise, why did the empire embrace it?

JUDGE: Historical necessity has majestic, inexorable laws greater than any dream of the mystic heart. The empire adopted the Faith for a reason more commanding than your kind of love. *Policy!* There's a magic word for you, Eusebius: policy unlocks the great enigmas of a time. Have you any idea what tumult and disintegration are cracking the mighty seams of the old world? what shadows of worlds unborn converge like enormous waves upon the uncharted horizons of the future?

EUSEBIUS: I hear things have become even more difficult than I had foresensed.

JUDGE: I'll say difficult! Caesars come and go, climbing swiftly up the slippery rope of blood to an absolute power which crumbles in their hands as they slide down again into the abyss of violent death and infamy: hunger and futile slavery fill whole peoples with vast, restless rebellion: each against each, all against all in world-wide revenge, treachery and scorn: the old gods are mocked and helpless: the old bonds which held the turbulent spirits of men at bay are so much dust. Yes, Eusebius, Rome is no longer Rome while remaining Rome forever: the empire is split in two: the barbarians make mighty inroads: the migration of unknown peoples surges in from north and east on horseback and on foot, with bow and arrow, with lance and pike, shield and battleax, as dense masses many ranks deep, loving war more than life itself, hurl themselves upon our classic heritage grown contemptuous of the past and indifferent to the future: and now each day of an era in which spring engulfs winter ends its record with the ritual of a new way of life in which the town is sacked, the inhabitants massacred, the captives tortured. Amidst this endless welter of war and blood, who knows what Europe's future holds? But see the miracle! Before Constantine beheld the flaming cross in the sky, he had deeply perceived the

power of the Faith to unite all peoples in a broken world. That was the real issue and the real solution: *unite or perish!* Through our faith we shall in the long run subdue the hearts of the barbarians: we shall give the generations a miraculous common bond: we shall preserve Europe!

EUSEBIUS: Then we agree. Our creed will teach men to live in charity toward one another.

JUDGE: No, fool! I am not talking mysticism but politics. The key is still power: only power really transforms.

EUSEBIUS: I do not understand, Titus. All-pervading and universal is the new way of life: all must now be cleansed in the redeeming waters of baptism, renounce Satan, his pompa, works and demons: all values will be transvalued. What once was dearest to the hearts of men—honor, power, wealth, pleasure—is now despised by all: what once was subject to contempt—humility, obedience, poverty, abstinence—is honored now as the sole way to the certain felicities of future life. And yet you say the old corruptions prevail?

(A close-up of Basil at the court clerk's table shows his face frowning: he is obviously annoyed by the colloquy between magistrate and mystic. The crowd, however, follows everything with the keenest attention.)

JUDGE: Eusebius, you are a slave of the absolute. Your hair is white and you still have a schoolboy's notion of world and soul. Who is corrupt: we who seek to make the dream a deed or you who flee the realm of men into discarnate orgies of unreal perfections? Yes, evil will still prevail: men will shed blood copiously for power: falsehood will subtly dance through capitals, palaces and cathedrals: there will be masters and slaves, victors and vanquished for a thousand years to come: but we shall save Europe and we shall make it better in the realm of fact, leaving consummate dreams to future dreamers like yourself floating forever between earth and heaven in search of the unconsummated impossible.

EUSEBIUS: And truth?

JUDGE: Helot of the absolute! Your soul will never be free until you recognize the sovereign power of necessity.

EUSEBIUS: And goodness?

JUDGE: Patience, O white-haired child! Let a thousand years complete their inexorable struggle toward predestined goals. The Etruscan prophecy and St. Paul's assures us the millennium when Christ returns, raising to heaven the quick and the dead.

EUSEBIUS: And till the last trump of Judgment, shall the followers of Christ also struggle for temporal advantage and dominion?

JUDGE: He who wills the end wills the means. Our truth will

prevail through the very things we profess to despise: honor, power, wealth, pleasure. While you drift ineffectually in the bright luminous void of faith, hope and charity, we create, confirm and perpetuate the immense, continuous life of peoples. Rome forever: caput terrarum, caput rerum, caput ecclesiae!

EUSEBIUS: And love?

JUDGE: That dream will slumber for an eon upon a perfumed bed of futile phrases. You will perish of your own purity, Eusebius. The ever-virgin is never fruitful: to be fruitful, the soul must be wife: the deed must impregnate the dream. Bombast gives men no bread: love's extravagant glorification cannot save them from the barbarian's invading battleax. You have never seriously considered power: you have been too obsessed with its abuse to perceive the imperative need and majesty of the living thing. Where would Christ be without Constantine, the cross without the sword?

EUSEBIUS: And the Kingdom of Equals?

JUDGE: As long as men are unequal in capacity, they will be unequal in value.

EUSEBIUS: Ah, how imperiously the will corrupts the spirit! Need we confound capacity with value? Is not every soul precious?

JUDGE: In the eyes of God only. Men require authority.

EUSEBIUS: I recognize just, creative authority.

JUDGE: You do? How gracious of you to accept the universe! Authority grows without approval. It is always there like earth, sea and sky. It is indispensable not only to the ruler but to those he rules. They crave from his mighty hand the guidance of a father: from his courage their own takes fire: they gladly follow his iron will like a lodestar toward mounting victory. Authority is nature's own law: it cannot be an absolute evil.

EUSEBIUS: I do not say it is an absolute evil: neither is it an absolute good.

JUDGE: You cannot steer a ship, feed a nation, win a war or advance a creed to ultimate triumph without unified direction and one deciding will.

EUSEBIUS: Granted. But why make a goal of instruments, veil primeval lust in sacred dogma, abuse necessary powers to the detriment of all?

JUDGE: Men are subject to abuse. Let us start with the given, categorical and ineluctable. Over the relentless gates of the realm of necessity, words of fire proclaim the primal law: *power!*

(There is an awkward silence. Eusebius looks downcast. A close-up of the judge shows his strong, subtle Roman face smiling with the mysteries of dominion, greater and more obscure than those of love. A close-up of Basil shows him increasingly impatient: he puts

his hand inside his tunic, holds it there reflectively for a moment, withdraws it empty. There are indistinct murmurs in the attentive crowd.)

EUSEBIUS: Titus, you tempt me more bitterly than ever Satan did. You have taken my spirit to that lofty mountain from whose treacherous height one sees nothing but empires rise and fall to the end of time, while man remains cruel and unredeemed, steeped in greed, slavery, lust and blood.

JUDGE: I regret it as much as you, my poor Eusebius, but the world must be saved as best it can; and what is saved will be better than the ills which now torment it. You see only empire, slavery and blood: you fail to see beyond these the golden fruit springing from man's eternal cruelty and will: great deeds, deep thoughts, vast cities, sublime creations of art.

EUSEBIUS (*his face suddenly alight with partial insight*): Nay, Titus: I see more! I see the true heritage we shall leave to the generations: we shall transmit to them not only our irresistible power, but also our irresistible dream which shall live through and beyond the ephemeral shapes of dominion. The die is cast! We have planted the seed forever! Henceforth men can never forget the sacred call to freedom!

JUDGE: What are you dreaming now?

EUSEBIUS (*his faith radiant with vision*): This, Titus: You know that they which are accounted to rule over the gentiles, exercise lordship over them, and their great ones exercise authority upon them: but so shall it not be among you: but whosoever of you will be great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all! Yes, Titus: we are called not to dominate men but to teach them: for when our Master came out and saw many people He was moved with compassion toward them because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and He began to teach them many things. Power may dominate the world, as you say, for two thousand years, which are but a drop in the endless sea of time: but in these centuries to come power itself must speak with the gospel in its hand, teaching the man to cherish the crowd and the crowd to cherish the man: for what shall it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his own soul? Truly, Titus: it is man we must cherish above all, for the sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath. And down the millennia, it is not the powerful first of all who shall listen to our teaching, but the undefiled millions to whom our Master said: come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, for I am meek and lowly in heart. And did He not speak eternal truth when He warned the ages that out of the heart proceed

evil thoughts, murder, false witness? Yea, and he spoke to all men in all lands of the earth, of all colors and tongues, saying to his followers: go ye into the world and preach the gospel to every creature: go ye, therefore, and teach all nations: for He wished all barriers to vanish, all men to unite for the common good. And this is the great, luminous dream we shall ignite in the souls of men down the ages to redeem them: and however they may transform it, by whatever name they may call it, the light of its charity and wisdom will always lure them toward that freedom which every man in the last layers of his heart truly desires!

JUDGE (*smiling tolerantly*): I see, my poor Eusebius, it is useless to discuss these great matters with you. Excommunication, exile, suffering have taught you nothing.

EUSEBIUS: Have I spoken untruth?

JUDGE: In the general context of empire and salvation, it is truth: out of that context it may become a most destructive lie, an attack upon the Faith.

EUSEBIUS (*quietly*): I protest in the presence of God that I have always avoided with horror all error in matters of faith. Here I stand: I cannot do otherwise, so help me God. . . .

JUDGE: Every heretic says that: there is not one of them but fancies himself another Christ. But your protests are useless. I am going to pronounce sentence now. Have no fear, Eusebius: you are old and harmless. If you wish, your punishment will be light. I shall give you a choice: you may go to prison for a year, or return to the desert for the rest of your life.

EUSEBIUS: You give me this choice?

JUDGE: Yes, but before you make up your mind, I must warn you: even if you recant and return to the fold, you will not be allowed to live in Rome or Constantinople, and nowhere will you be permitted to preach, write or teach.

EUSEBIUS (*puzzled, melancholy, undecided: but when he speaks at last, his face is calm and his voice free of all rancor or regret*): Let me return to the desert, Titus. I have become accustomed to sun, sand and solitude: the howling of jackals no longer disturbs me: Satan tempts me but heaven sustains my soul: it is men who slay me with their ambiguous solicitude for the Faith.

JUDGE: Alas, poor Eusebius! You have chosen the more terrible fate. That man is dead who is dead to the world.

EUSEBIUS: No, no, Titus: by dying to the world we do not die to God. He who wants to see truly must free himself of care, want and fear: when a soul comes to desire what few desire, to be nameless, an outcast, disgraced, and makes all welcome, then she attains to peace and the true freedom required for real vision in the mirror

of divinity. Surely in the desert I shall at last find serenity, release and redemption.

JUDGE (*rises and with him the entire courtroom*): Be it so, Eusebius, and may God in His mercy show you the error of your ways. (*Turns to the soldiers who had brought Eusebius.*) Men! escort him to the borders of the capital and there release him into relentless space and solitary time.

(*The soldiers take their places on either side of Eusebius. Basil rises from the clerk's desk, his face ravaged with guile, ambition and vanity.*)

BASIL: Don't be hasty, Titus!

JUDGE: What's up?

BASIL: You are too lenient with this double-damned heretic. (*He takes the manuscript of Eusebius out of his tunic and hands it to the judge.*) Read this and reconsider!

(*Eusebius is puzzled again. The judge glances through the manuscript. The crowd murmurs unheard questions.*)

JUDGE (*severely*): Who mutilated this manuscript?

BASIL (*proudly*): I did.

JUDGE: Basil, you're a barbarian!

BASIL: Wait till you see what's in it.

JUDGE: No matter! We may destroy the author without destroying his work. As well mutilate a man as a manuscript.

BASIL: You're still a pagan at heart, Titus.

JUDGE (*glancing at the manuscript*): Mmmm. . . . You're incorrigible, Eusebius. For whom have you been writing this trash?

EUSEBIUS: For those whose hearts are free to read: those who have conquered strife, contemplate the highest good in themselves, gladly begin with beginners and are so masters of themselves that they are incapable of anger.

BASIL: He lies! He wrote it for posterity. He is greedy for praise!

EUSEBIUS: I want no praise: I want only to be praiseworthy.

JUDGE (*severely to Eusebius*): There is no posterity for simpletons like you. What are you doing? Insisting upon your innocence?

EUSEBIUS: We are all tainted with sin, but in this case I am innocent.

JUDGE: That stubborn assertion confirms your guilt!

EUSEBIUS: I said it because you asked me. I do not insist upon it. I insist upon nothing.

BASIL: He does insist! Read that last sentence in his heretical parchment!

JUDGE (*reading aloud*): All men are equal not in capacity but in value. . . . Mmmmmmm. . . . You do insist, Eusebius, you cling to

the heresy of tearing sublime truths out of their context in the creed and out of their restricted meanings in time's fluctuating boundaries. (*Throwing the manuscript to Basil.*) Here, put that carefully away in the archives.

EUSEBIUS: No, Titus: I do not insist. I confess a faith: I plead for my fellow believers: I appeal to future generations not for my sake but for their own and for the sake of us all.

JUDGE: This is sheer defiance! Someday we shall be secure enough to create a splendid trigon of contrition, confession and indulgence: now we must be relentless. We cannot suffer men to defend opinions which are not lawful to hold.

EUSEBIUS: I am confused, Titus. What have I said in this manuscript that I haven't said before?

JUDGE: There is a difference. You insist, you appeal, you *write*. This leaves me no alternative, Eusebius. (*Turns to Basil.*) Where is the physician Marcus?

BASIL: In another part of the palace.

JUDGE: Fetch him at once. Then take Eusebius to the public square. Burn him at the stake!

3

(*The square outside the palace of justice. An immense crowd watches soldiers pile high the faggots around Eusebius. The old man is tied to a wooden stake. The sky is dark with approaching dusk and lowering clouds. Basil stands near by talking with the physician Marcus.*)

MARCUS (*looking at Eusebius intently, but addressing Basil*): He used to be my teacher. I have not seen him since his trial fifty years ago. How he has changed!

BASIL: Everything changes. This pleasant little ritual will be over in five minutes, Marcus. You will sign the death certificate: then we'll go to my house for dinner. I can offer you some imported Falernian wine, the best. (*To the soldiers.*) Hurry, hurry! It will be dark soon. Let's avoid the night air.

A SOLDIER: If this isn't fast enough, why don't you do it yourself?

BASIL (*to Eusebius*): And now, pestilent heretic: will you recant, abjure and renounce your errors?

EUSEBIUS (*looking to heaven*): Let me not swerve from the truth, O God! Let me not abjure errors imputed to me by false witnesses!

BASIL: For the last time, Eusebius, I urge you: recant!

EUSEBIUS: God is my witness, Basil, that I have never taught

or preached that which false witnesses have testified against me. He knows that the object of all my preaching and writing was to convert men from sin. In the truth of that gospel which hitherto I have written, taught and preached, I now joyfully die.

BASIL (*to the physician Marcus*): When the flames have done their office, we shall carefully remove the ashes of this heretic and even the soil which they pollute and throw them into the Bosphorus. (*To Eusebius.*) You see how the world goes, old man: I doubt, you believe: I watch, you burn (*Eusebius smiles but does not answer; there is no fear in his aged face or ever-young blue eyes.*) You used to despise me, Eusebius: you were the brilliant, beloved teacher, the intimate friend of Polyclitus: I was only a cipher in his retinue. Now look at me—and look at you! (*He turns to Marcus, chuckling.*) The best part of it is, I injured him but he's got to forgive me.

MARCUS: Forgiveness is a high Christian virtue.

BASIL: Civilized life is impossible without forgiveness; and since the guilty cannot bring themselves to forgive the innocent, the innocent must forgive the guilty.

(*The soldiers complete the pyre. They wave the crowd back and light the fire. The wood begins to crackle. The crowd solemnly chants the fourth century hymn "Light of Gladness, Beam Divine," then falls into awed silence. Waves of heat float across the square. The space around Eusebius grows wider as the people, the soldiers, Basil and the physician Marcus retreat before the rising conflagration. And now Eusebius, still visible through the flames, raises his eyes to heaven and his voice in prayer.*)

EUSEBIUS: O Virgin Mother, daughter of thy Son! surpassing all created beings in lowliness as in height: term preordained by the eternal council: ennobler of your nature, so advanced in You that its great Maker did not scorn to make Himself his own Creation: for, rekindling in Your womb, that revealed love shone whose genial influence now makes this flower germinate in eternal peace: to us here You are the noonday torch of charity and love, and to mortal men a living spring. (*The flames rise higher and higher: the smoke conceals the body and face of Eusebius: but his voice is still heard across the crowded square.*) Lady, You are so mighty and so great that he who desires grace and does not come to You for help is a man who wants to fly without wings: Your bounty aids not only him who asks but often anticipates the asking. (*Square and dusk glow with the raging fire which consumes the faggots without yet reaching Eusebius. The dark skies are red. Invisible through the heavy smoke. Eusebius coughs, then goes on with his prayer.*) Everything good in created beings is combined in You: mild pity, relenting

mercy, large munificence. Hear me, O Holy Mother, in humble prayer: look into my heart. . . .

(The coughing of Eusebius becomes violent. Smoke begins to strangle his voice; he cannot continue. There is a tremendous burst of thunder. Lightning splits the sky. A heavy deluge of rain comes down upon the square drenching the crowd and damping the fire. Soon the flames are dead. Stake and pyre are wet in the powerful rain which keeps pouring down upon everything and everyone. The crowd retreats in awe. Eusebius, his face and figure clear in the air of dusk, looks toward heaven with tears of gratitude in his eyes. Everyone thinks this is a miracle. Murmurs of surprise, reverence and fear permeate the square. Suddenly the rain stops. Stars emerge brilliantly in a pale sky of dusk luminous with the day's last rays of light. Basil looks around puzzled. Then, with quick decision, he goes to the stake, draws his dagger and cuts the rope which binds Eusebius.)

BASIL: This may not be a sign from heaven, but why take chances? Go free, fool!

(Basil rejoins the crowd. Everyone draws back in veneration of the mystery as Eusebius descends from the stake and kneels in the open square under the clear vault of twilight. He folds his hands, raises his eyes and continues his prayer. His face is suffused with the purest, most intense faith.)

EUSEBIUS: Hear me, O Holy Mother, in humble prayer: look into my heart: You know my sins, forgive them: my hopes, have mercy upon them: open the eyes of men: teach them the wisdom of the heart: allay their hatred: water their love with Your abundance of it: cleanse man's soul of wicked dominion, his mind of ignorance, his tongue of treachery, his hand of greed, the earth of blood: let the generations be worthy of Your benevolence and their faith: let them create cities and fields to mirror the great light of charity You shed upon all creatures: let them build fortresses of love against black hordes of sin and death: and in Your eternal bounty let men strive without respite for the luminous Kingdom of justice. Beati qui esuriunt et sitiunt iustitiam: blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: Amen!

(There is a vast silence. The people watch Eusebius as he concludes his prayer and rises slowly from his knees. He stands a moment unsteadily, looks around the crowded square, collapses to the ground insensible. Man's cruelty and God's mercy have been too much for him. To his prostrate body come Basil and Marcus, followed by several soldiers and a few adventurous members of the crowd. The physician kneels beside the body of Eusebius, places his ear to the old man's heart and listens.)

MARCUS: He is dead.

BASIL: A fit end for a schismatic dog. He died of a stroke of heresy.

MARCUS: No, no: a beautiful death: he failed to grasp our realities but saw something we could not see and perished of his own clairvoyance.

9

*'And, if the heart within your breast must burst . . .
Strive to recast once more
That attar of the ore
In the strong mold of pain
Till it is whole again.*

—Stephen Vincent Benét.

FROM THIS VISION I woke filled with exaltation and lifted to incredible heights of faith: not in any dogma, old or new, nor in any set of men or set of words: no, at this moment my heart went out to man himself, to his future upon this earth, to the salvation he seemed about to achieve with his own hands now, today, beginning with the new year whose dawn came pouring into my room.

Then a terrible question confronted me:

Do you really believe this? Are you convinced that the catastrophes and defeats of a thousand years will in the end lead to some great, universal victory for mankind? Oh, not for the privileged who pose as mankind, but for the millions, the whole of humanity, the common men and women of the earth?

And my heart replied: Yes, yes, this is what I believe.

Do you believe this today? my head, insisted; now when the world is whirling through frenzy and slaughter: now of all times? Yes, said my heart.

Then you are mad! said my head triumphantly. You ought to see a doctor at once.

I broke free from this internal struggle, leaped out of bed, shaved, dressed and went out still elated as if the vision had been reality and the real world mere dream. At Kosta the Greek's on Columbus Avenue I had breakfast without knowing what I ate or whether I answered his New Year's greeting. Afterward I went to Central Park and began to walk in no direction. At ten I remembered I had promised to call Joan. I cut into West Seventy-second Street, found a cigar store and entered the phone booth. The moment I heard her voice say *hello* I lost my nerve and hung up. Then I knew I was terribly afraid of everyone and everything. Cold sweat poured down my body as I wandered the streets and in

desperation I remembered your card, doctor. I looked at the address and phone number but was afraid to call. It's New Year's Day, I thought, he won't be in, wait till tomorrow. I ducked into a movie, came out three hours later, went to another and continued this until midnight and exhaustion drove me home.

Next morning I called you and you were kind enough to see me. I've already told you frankly, doctor, I came to see you not in faith but in despair. I was afraid the same thing had happened to your idea as with so many great ideas whose victory bears little resemblance to what was sought. It was imperative for me to shatter the protracted despotism of absurd and terrifying memories which assailed me directly or in the metaphor of dream and vision, yet I recoiled from liberating myself for fear the old cycle would return. I looked upon you with suspicion and resentment, but saw no alternative except to place myself in your hands without reserve.

And now, after seven months of analysis, I can say truly that you have done me a world of good. The treatment has been extremely painful, but the results are all I could have wished for. The past has released its sickly grip upon my heart; the present is becoming alive and all-important; I have even begun to think of the future.

What a difficult process free association is! Yet it's the only one by which my awareness admits trains of thought which otherwise would be automatically censored. When I have too strongly resisted intruders from the submerged cavern of forgotten things, you have helped me with explanations which aided the emergence of repressed mental content. You opened the path which gave this hidden material, now out in the light of day, a setting in the history of my own life, therefore also in my lifework, the recorded history of man. I am amazed at the self-control with which you have played the mentor as little as possible, the skill with which you have allowed me, whenever I was ready, to make independent decisions. By providing this technique of security, detached interest and tolerance, you have enabled me to start upon the only possible road of personal liberation along which we may remodel ourselves.

Is it true, doctor, that the analyst listens to his patient with suspended attention which oscillates between free play of fantasy and critical scrutiny? Then yours is indeed an art: for isn't it with that kind of suspended attention that we read poems and novels, watch plays and films, look at pictures and listen to music? Surely that is the road to real understanding: critical scrutiny enables you to judge the patient's confession or the artist's work by rational standards: free play of fantasy enables you to feel either, to be one with it for a while and thereby to see and live it truly from within.

I must say, doctor, I have been quite surprised at the results of free association. At the beginning, you advised me not to concentrate on any particular idea, not to guide my thoughts consciously, but to let them wander freely. I realize now that it was thus I finally recovered my forgotten dreams and visions. And you were a thousand times right: the dream or vision does create a picture which sometimes works more effectively to educate the feelings and understanding than the most learned discourse. Perhaps that is what Anatole France meant by his paradox: the power of dreams is greater than that of reality. And perhaps, too, that is why a historian like myself, addicted in the normal course of things to logic and learning, can secretly be so partial to the poets of all the arts who, in the long run, are the world's great dreamers, revealing behind the obscure veils of official history the naked beating of man's heart.

When I first came here seven months ago, I complained I was unable to work because I was preoccupied with the dead, the friends and strangers killed or executed in the fierce combats of our own and other times. At first I would not believe your suggestion that I was obsessed with the dead because I was myself dead, because deep down in my soul I had perished upon that demented prison scaffold. It was only by degrees, as I revived and faced the past, year by year, shock by shock, that truth at last unveiled its features, so full of terror, beauty and promise; and I saw clearly that a dead man cannot live, work or love, that all my senses and powers must unite for some great interior transformation.

That was the hardest part of it all, doctor. On the surface, the task you outlined appeared rather simple after a while: associate freely, acquire insight into your unconscious drives, improve your attitude toward yourself and others. That involved change, and it was precisely change I feared most. Secretly I loved the past which tortured me, and clung to it as a refuge against that inevitable mutation which comes to each of us and the world at large, and which we must accept as we accept transition from infancy to manhood, from barbarism to civilization.

It has been a tremendous civil war in which what is childish and savage in me has contended for mastery with what is mature, rational and truly human. I realize now that my better self found valuable aid within the veiled realms of memory itself; for as I hauled up reluctant fragments of my narrative from the abyss, I brought up not only what was evil, gross and terrifying but those unyielding dreams of the good which can be my strongest allies; and I rediscovered again and again that while man's acts are circumscribed, the world is by no means closed to us if we know how

to abandon expectations which time has slaughtered. I came here as a man suffering because he secretly finds it pleasant to ignore the evidence of sense, reason and heart; my soul wore masquerade not out of cunning but out of fear; I succumbed to memories like a voluptuary and longed for that age when the iron chain of necessity was still garlanded with roses; and through years of accidental fury and enchantment I indulged in tears at the mere thought of Queen Eleanor's statue in Charing Cross which I had never seen.

Now I know with absolute conviction that this was in another country, and besides the wench is dead. One must recapture the past in order to abandon and transcend it. I am ready to face the hazards of tomorrow; and because I am at last irrevocably certain that reality has not only a body but a soul, I can without concealed guilt open for myself magic casements of truth upon grandiose landscapes of hope, and let fresh winds of endless advance purify the fetid atmosphere of the obvious with its absurd failures. And as I look out your window this afternoon and see the brilliant sunlight of Bastille Day raining its glory of high assurance into the streets of Manhattan below, my heart salutes the remembered undying light of liberty, equality and fraternity with apologies to no man, least of all those in any country who, with a smile of false wisdom upon features ravaged with insatiable power, chain themselves and their multitude of victims to death's chariot, as if this were the greatest triumph available to men.

I'd like to use this hour, doctor, to recapitulate several high points in the past few months.

There were a lot of people at the farewell party we gave Michael Gordon the night before he left for an army camp in the South. He was in a gay mood, but to all our shouts for a speech he firmly said no.

"What's there to say?" he insisted. "We've got to win this war, and every one of us must help. That's all there is to it."

After he left for camp, I did not expect to hear from him. He'll be too busy soldiering to write, I thought. But Michael wrote frequently, and every new letter which came from him increased my respect for everything he was and stood for.

I like to dwell on these letters because I like to think of Michael and because they are part of my American education which is beginning only now.

At first Michael was rather depressed by the contrast between his second military experience and his first. He remembered his companions climbing the cruel Pyrenees at night without the prod-

ding of draft boards. The thought of these free American spirits voluntarily choosing to face death in a distant land for the sake of the world's liberty filled him with nostalgia. This time, in the southern army camp, he saw at the beginning only the herding together of a mass of indifferent souls plunked down with little ceremony to shift for themselves. Everyone seemed blue the first week.

Before long, however, there was a great change and Michael shared it. He began writing me with admiration of the U. S. army in whose fighting capacity he developed the strongest possible faith. I have a tommy-gun, he wrote me, that shoots 645 bullets per minute: theoretically it could kill that many people in that time, and I am glad those people are going to be Japs and Nazis: that may not sound pleasant but it's the way we are starting to feel around here: and take my word for it, this is an army which will accomplish whatever it sets out to do: when we want to, we Yanks know how to get things done: I never dreamed a military machine could be so intricate, well-oiled and powerful. His postscript said: by the way, the captain invited me to lecture to the company on the Spanish war: he was so pleased, he's going to have me repeat it to the division staff officers: what do you think of that?

After a while Michael found time to think about other aspects of the war. We're going to preserve a free world, he wrote me, so it's important more than ever to remember that man lives not by machines alone. We must save the goods we have, material and spiritual: in order to increase them on more splendid levels of living, we must learn to develop a higher kind of human being: big machines are dangerous in the hands of little men: we must face the fact that the machine can swamp our minds, hearts and wills and rob us of the essence of our humanity unless we do something about it: look at the men our queer mechanical society has been turning out: on the one hand, paranoids distorted by an inflated lust for power and grandeur: on the other, split men whose brains flourish at the expense of their hearts and wills, who can think without the least capacity for acting: we've got to co-ordinate the disjointed atoms of our civilization: to unite man and machine: to break down barriers between peoples, countries and fields of knowledge: Sophocles must begin to fraternize with Newton, Shakespeare with Einstein, Bach with Edison: we must do this to win the real victory of this war for man's liberation.

One letter from Michael contained this curious paragraph: I have never been what you might call a rebel: I have never openly resisted authority: but I did have secret reservations about it: I can't say why, but I never gave myself wholeheartedly to any chief:

now it's different : the other day, marching back from the rifle range, I suddenly remembered Thersites, the ugliest man in the Greek army besieging Troy and a high-powered backbiter : I began to hate Thersites : surely you remember how this ape sniped at everybody : he was an indefatigable character assassin and his favorite objects of attack were the men responsible for victory : there is a passage in Homer where Ulysses upbraids this double-dealer for attacking the Commander in Chief : it's a magnificent passage and I like to think of it now when I feel like shouting : hats off to the leaders of the United Nations ! For my money, that includes not only Churchill, Stalin and Chiang Kai-shek, but also Jan Masaryk, Avilo Camacho, Manuel Quezon and all the other valiant and gifted guides, great and small, who stand at the helm in this most enormous of destiny's storms : as for our country, we're especially lucky in our leader : I say we're blessed beyond words that it isn't anybody like Owen Cope and that it is Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Michael also likes to send me newspaper clippings of letters by soldiers. I remember one which Joe York of Clinton, Tennessee, wrote his mother just before he was lost at Bataan. Mother, said Joe York, I am sorry I didn't write you more often than I did : Mother, I'm sending you some pictures of me that I had made some time ago : I hope you will get them : it looks pretty bad for me right now : if I don't get back, don't worry about me : you will know that I went down fighting for Uncle Sam and the good old U.S.A. : one thing I will help fix it so none of my sister's sons will ever go to war : when we get through these Axis powers will never be able to bring war on anybody else.

A magazine clipping Michael sent me last month included a letter a man named Ted Sutton of Atlanta, Georgia, wrote his wife explaining why he enlisted in the navy. Later Sutton was lost in a sea battle. Sometimes, he wrote his wife, it is hard to say or write the things we feel, and this is one time in my life that even thinking becomes very hard : I want you to be brave and strong while I am away : I know you will meet with trials and tribulations, and the burden will seem at times too heavy to carry : but someday we shall look back and find that the load wasn't too heavy after all : we must not be like those who think only of themselves : my decision to enlist was brought about by the ruthless attack of the Japs made upon our country, my country : in some puny way I may be able to help : we must not, we will not allow them to take away the freedom, the liberty, the things we hold dear.

Whenever I get one of these clippings from Michael I wonder whether he isn't masking his own deepest feelings behind these let-

ters. I think I'm right about that, because I heard from him yesterday and there were some more clippings of that kind and Michael's comment on them was: These are great letters: they read like Lincoln and Whitman in spirit because they come from the heart of the people: whatever ambitious and dangerous men may be doing, the American people is shedding blood and treasure for the most sublime, the most persistent ideals of mankind: justice, courage, love of country, peace, freedom: what poet could write letters like these? Only soldiers and sailors can write them because they come from the people and write with their blood.

Now and then Michael reveals secret dreams about his own tastes in literature. Just as Kurt used to be preoccupied with Dante, so Michael likes to think about the American poet of the future. This emerging creator has ancestors. Again and again Michael's letters invoke passages from Whitman which impress him with some special meaning for our own day which he hopes I will understand. He cites as gospel truth the great poet's insistence that once fully enslaved, no nation, state or city of this earth ever afterward resumes its liberty; that a great city is that which has the greatest men and women; that liberty is to be subserved whatever occurs; that nothing will satisfy the soul except to walk free and own no superior; that society waits unformed and is for a while between things ended and things begun; that the United States themselves are essentially the greatest poem, for here at last there is something in the doings of man that corresponds with the broadcast doings of the day and night. But Michael finds great seeds of future creation also in Poe, American bard of man's interior life. Once, in a moment of deep self-revelation, he wrote me: Fusing the heritage of Poe and Whitman, the adventurous mind looks out upon the world with telescopic clairvoyance as the American soul probes itself, ample with emerging purpose, in crucibles of destiny: both invoke an uncorrupted will, athletic, full of braveries, creating all with that ancestral constancy which apprehends that he also serves who only stands and waits: and this new poet of the Western world quietly scans earth, sea and sky, the turbulent mathematics of the town, the lonely mountains of his native land and in the heart of its magnificent multitudes for those precise American words which shall announce across the world's resolved horizons the clearest chants of tomorrow's freedoms: and the heart is unconditional at last to love the nearest street or farm yet roam in time unfettered, assured at last that all man's story in the past and all his glory in the future is most American because most human.

Michael expects to come to New York on leave at the end of the

month. I needn't tell you, doctor, how keenly I look forward to seeing him and renewing our friendship on the new level to which this analysis has brought me.

For one thing, I'd like to let him know in some way how grateful I am that his own life in this new world confirms so quietly and surely certain hopes I have encountered on my journey through the century and which now emerge in other, perhaps more effective shapes everywhere in so many splendid young people.

10

*Roaming in thought over the Universe, I saw the little
that is Good steadily hastening towards immortality,
And the vast that is Evil I saw hastening to merge itself
and become lost and dead.*

—Walt Whitman.

I SUPPOSE YOU KNOW, doctor, that Hague is back from his trip to England and Russia. He phoned me this morning inviting me for dinner tonight. When I asked him what his plans were, he said he's going to be busy in the election campaign, and that he wants a Congress for Victory.

"Right now," he said, "there are two main jobs for every decent American: to fight the Axis abroad and the Owen Copes at home."

When I go to his house for dinner tonight I'm taking Joan. You know how things stand between us. I can still hardly believe my senses. Like most people in the condition from which I am at last emerging, I was so preoccupied with my own life that I paid little attention to hers despite the fact that I've been seeing her four or five times a week since New Year's.

For a long time she was reticent about her feelings and I was not able to sense them. During the first two weeks of this analysis, I avoided Joan and did not even reply to her phone messages. Then, on a day of unexpected spiritual release, I called her, apologized for my rude behavior, explained my condition and told her I had placed myself in your hands, doctor. She forgave me, seemed to be pleased that I had gone to you after all, and asked me to take her to dinner that very evening.

From the beginning she sensed my problems and in the most acute phases of my recovery, when the catastrophes of the past seemed to me insurmountable and every trifle in the present evoked the desire to die and be done with it all, she set out to make me feel at home in the world. It's only now, in the clarity of this new life, that I begin to understand those hours in restaurants, movies, concerts, parks, busses, ferries and house parties when, close beside me or from the corner of a living room, her beautiful gray-blue eyes would search my face intently for clues to guide her in that tender care she gave so generously.

"It wasn't easy," she confessed the other day. "I used to walk on eggs. Whenever we met, I'd let you open the conversation; I was afraid I might tread on some touchy point and upset you. What I had to say could wait. I wanted to know first what was on your mind."

Until recently, the only thing on my mind was the story I've been telling you, a good deal of which, omitting all psychoanalytic details, I told Joan. She seemed to understand everything perfectly.

Curiously enough, my relations with Peggy made a profound impression on her from the first. She has admitted that she used to wonder secretly whether anyone would ever love her that way, then whether I would be that man. But for months she had no assured feeling of any kind about me.

"You have an ephemeral quality," she used to tell me. "Nobody anywhere on this earth can ever wholly capture it."

But, despite her youth, she was so mature that she accepted this shortcoming for the sake of other things which seemed to her more important in a man who almost from the beginning appeared to correspond to her earliest needs in love. It was that, perhaps, which enabled her to listen with such extraordinary patience to my story.

There was some jealousy of the past, too. She used to wish she had known me when I was twenty-five "before those other people"; that she had been the first in my life. But she would halt these fantasies by saying to herself: aren't you silly: in those days he wasn't the man he is now, the man you like so much: and it's those people and events of which you are jealous that made him what he is: forget about the past.

Then other doubts would assail her. She wondered whether I would ever learn to care for her as deeply as she cared for me, or whether she was making a fool of herself over a mirage doomed to vanish, leaving her empty and defeated. These uncertainties she would overcome by reminding herself that as long as I was undergoing analysis and reliving the whole past no definite judgments were possible about the future.

"The first five months were certainly tough," she told me the other day. "I weathered them by putting myself completely in the background. After a while I didn't mind it."

In the spring a great change came. You remember, doctor, that at that time my better self began to get the upper hand in the civil war I am about to bring to a fruitful conclusion. It was then, too, that I broke out of my shell enough to see Joan not merely as the shadow of my own being and the pleasant echo of my own thoughts, but as a real person.

What a marvelous surprise that was! We were dining one night at a Spanish restaurant near Brooklyn Bridge. It was a small place

whose three rooms opened into each other. You passed through the cigar store and bar into the tenement dining room from which you could see the kitchen at whose iron stove the tiny Galician proprietress did the cooking. Spanish and Latin-American workers sat around a long table in dungarees and caps eating the *sopa del dia* and drinking *vino rojo*. Joan and I took a small table in a corner and ordered a full dinner. The wine came with it and was so good, that in ten minutes my senses awoke to an awareness they had not known in a long time.

"I like you, Joan, and know nothing about you," I said. "Who are you?"

"About time you asked that," she said, smiling. "I've told you lots about myself but you haven't listened."

It was then I noticed in her lovely face that patience which fortified her love. She began talking about her early youth in California, and magically evoked the enchantment of a coastland where roses faced the sea. She told me new anecdotes about her school days, the little library to which she used to walk a mile every week to get the books she loved, the golden beach where an incredible sun caressed her limbs beside the western ocean, the football games and concerts in the Rose Bowl, the long auto rides curving on hairpin roads along immense mountains above the shore; and this time it was I who was jealous of the past and wished I had known her from the beginning. When I took her home and kissed her good night, my heart beat violently.

"I feel something deep for you which I'm afraid to name," I said. "You've been so good and patient. Won't you wait a little longer until I'm ready?"

"I'll wait forever," she said, and the tender warmth of her lips confirmed the hyperbole.

On the way back to my room, strange new thoughts surged through my mind. Joan was young, generous, free of all corruption; yet what she offered me was no schoolgirl crush but the love of a grown woman. It was not corroded by vanity or ambition: she wanted to love and to be loved, and to my surprise I found myself going out to her with all my heart. I did not know how it had happened and did not care. The feeling was too precious to probe or reject; it was there in all the rich assurance that Joan was now the most wonderful person in my life and the most loyal. Any day without her was dark and meaningless; every moment with her was full of an indescribable glory which hallowed whatever place we visited together, the city which enveloped us, the earth itself and all the existences upon it.

Then I wondered about Peggy and realized that her love would never lose its beauty or meaning for me, that I would always cherish

her in my heart to the end of things precisely as I had always cherished her. That was no paradox but a law of life: the love that was need not hamper the love that is: lights of veneration can burn on memory's altars at the very moment when the heart gives itself fully and freely to those we love among the living.

But if that is true of our private loves, if I found no difficulty now in identifying my future life wholly with Joan while remembering in all its beauty my past life with Peggy, wasn't it equally true of our public hopes and aspirations? The great dreams of the century, in the forms I had known them, had died as Peggy had died, and who knows perhaps on that very Spanish soil which enshrined her mortal ashes. Wasn't it possible to remember those dreams with joy and gratitude while giving my heart fully and freely to the new possibilities bound to come with the dawn of tomorrow?

The evening on which this strange thought occurred to me because I had discovered my emerging love for Joan was a turning point toward the future. Yes, there was a future once more. My lacerated heart was healing. It was ready to say a last farewell to a turbulent past which had to be abandoned and transcended; it was anxious to give to Joan all the love and the world all the faith of which I was capable.

Then came that rare day in June when we stood in Michael's old office at the Hague publications and looked down at the immense parade winding its way through the sun up Fifth Avenue.

It surged by all day long like an endless flow of living waters and everybody was there: old and young, rich and poor, men and women, native and foreign, black and white, brown and yellow, the firm onward flowing sea of freedom's warriors with gun and lathe, an august cavalcade of the will to triumph: all everywhere raised aloft the immortal V above the sublime bars of Beethoven's symphony: the floats came by in which the artists of free peoples marked in the alphabet of plastics those chapters of the war of liberation which are already history: musicians filled the skies with chants of freedom: workers, swinging the hands by which the nation lives, announced the people's genius for production: drama's great devices, pity and terror and the call to arms, roared victory across the earth for friends to cheer and foes to dread: and in this high moment some secret iron bond of internal slavery snapped asunder and my heart came free and I looked at Joan standing beside me at the window and thanked heaven she existed for me to know.

The early summer sun fell like a nimbus across her dark bright

brown hair with its subtle snap of red flame; her dark bright gray-blue eyes, lucid with intelligence and kindness, looked steadily at the marchers in the street below, and her generous red mouth was barely parted in a subtle smile of happiness.

"This is wonderful," she said with deep feeling.

"It is wonderful," I said, "and you are wonderful, too."

They kept coming up the avenue. There was the black prelude: death riding his horse of destruction, beating the swastika on kettledrums of doom for tattered exiles dragging household goods in battered carts toward the barbed-wire tangles of a concentration camp. My heart shuddered on the brink of memory's sepulchers; but, recovering balance, caught the light of today in Joan's smile; and I knew the tombs were closing forever and that my being no longer belonged to the past but to this marvelous girl standing beside me and to the world marching up the avenue with all the banners of life unfurled in resolute affirmation.

"I'd rather see this parade with you than with anybody in the world," Joan said.

"Do you know something?"

"What?"

"You have the most beautiful face in the world."

"You're sweet to say that, and prejudiced."

"No, it's a fact."

We looked down at the mighty cheers from the millions along the sidewalks. Here they come, humanity's avengers: British and Canadian flyers in powder-blue uniforms; Australians in khaki shorts and green helmets; South African sailors in white: the lovely firm faces of Canadian WAACS under peaked caps: daredevil Poles of the RAF; Czechs remembering Lidice: and behind the cross of Lorraine the fighting Free French bearing the slogan of democracy's rise across the ridges of today: and my heart rose high with memory and hope to see once more along the sky the faith which can never die whose commandments are liberty, equality, fraternity.

"What are you thinking?" Joan said.

"I'm thinking how wonderful it is that old prejudices can be surmounted in this hour of fiery trial; that free peoples can at last unite for necessary combat; and how wonderful it would be if this day is remembered and the free peoples can unite afterward for a world of peace and creation."

"That *would* be wonderful," she said.

"In that world," I said, "it would be very nice to live with you."

She looked up, her dark bright gray-blue eyes full of question.

"You see, I can say it at last," I went on. "I love you, Joan."

Where we stood alone in that mountain of concrete and steel

high above the street, I took her supple body in my arms and kissed her against Manhattan's sky roaring with bombers of unwritten fate.

"I've loved you from the beginning," she said.

She took my hand in hers, and below us, along the crowded avenue of victory to come, the Dutch rolled by on their float, the Norwegians in their oil tanker on wheels, the Belgians flashing fixed bayonets, the white-blue skirts of the Greeks fluttering above long white stockings in tasseled shoes behind the Parthenon resplendent under the beautiful gaze of Athene in white robe listening to the tread of Yugoslav guerrillas in her wake.

And holding Joan close to me, I caught in the tumult of our hearts a question secretly addressed to the mighty of the earth who stand upon immense horizons directing destiny:

Will you employ this war's golden opportunities to create a great reality of freedom or merely one more rotten nightmare wearing obsolete masks of redemption?

The mighty of the earth could not hear this question; and if they did, how could it possibly matter to them what two obscure atoms among the millions wanted to know? The immediate, first, foremost, unconditional task is to annihilate that evil which at this moment makes all further good impossible until the Axis is shattered. On this I agree with all my heart and soul. The conflict belongs to the earth's multitudes: it is their war because they fight it and because upon its outcome hangs the future of all human existence. Yet even in the face of an ordeal as tremendous as this, one may perhaps be allowed to remember the great American plea that these dead shall not have died in vain, and the hope that we can destroy the swastika without replacing it by the Iron Heel. Today this expectation need not be extravagant, for now hope raises a shield of reason to stave off assaults by yesterday's false magic. It is time to beware of alleged realities constructed for us out of innocent blood shed copiously in vain. These are no more than the private dreams of the privileged in masquerades of ephemeral faith designed to deceive us. No age can recapture the past no matter how subtly reinvented, and this age must reject promised futures no better than the absurd failures which spawned them. Reason tempts us to believe no society can live without a social myth: then let ours be a fruitful myth whose heart longs for truth, whose soul seeks human salvation, whose brain forges effective instruments of redemption from crime and suffering, whose will molds in the clay of reality the potentials of an evolving paradise out of riches inherent in the earth and in the soul of man.

— "Something's on your mind, Paul," said Joan.

"There is," I said. "I love you so much that I can't think of the future without you, of my life without yours. Will you marry me?"

She buried her head in my arms.

"Yes," she whispered. "Yes."

From the street below a mighty cheer shook the summer air. Here they come, the liberators of liberty: first the Soviet sailors with their red flag flying beside the Stars and Stripes: and as their banners call for victory this year, I think how happy my father would have been to see this unity of free peoples: then China's heroes and heroes from lands south of the Rio Grande and across the great western sea, Indians, Negroes and Filipinos, Puerto Ricans, Hawaiians, Virgin Islanders, all, all determined to crush the Axis for liberty's sake.

And again the hope came to me that if this unity can be achieved for war, it can be achieved for peace; but I knew that first, foremost, unconditionally we must win this war, and that for me it had become personal because I wanted an earth fit not only for beasts but men, a world in which Joan would be safe and happy knowing it held vistas of freedom for the son she would bear me in the true love and marriage we had plighted this June day of the nations plighting upon American soil a true victory for liberty.

"Aren't you afraid?" Joan said.

"Of what?"

"A world is being wrecked."

"Another is being born."

And now look down into the street: here they come, America's fighting men for freedom, heroes of Corregidor and Bataan: and in a flash their immortal saga beat through my heart with all its agony and grandeur: the odor of smoldering blood surged over swamp, ricefield, jungle and rocky slope as crocodiles and pythons watched with eyes of wonder Americans stamping their people's undying hope upon this battlefield. Shadows of first eons recoiled before the barbarities of civilization: naked pygmies mild with banquets of tropic fruits and serpents shuddered at the fury of scientific slaughter and fled to secure craters high above the raging combat for mankind's future. Boys from Maine, Florida, Frisco and Whitman's Brooklyn crouched in primeval woodlands to meet a yellow tide of killers cunning with years of strategic treachery and techniques of murder and survival: and men who used to take cars apart in Michigan and reassemble them with precision found shelter under primordial interlacing trees against dive bombers, while ancient swamplands bogged enemy tanks. Man's destiny reverberated in this far-off rockland crimson with liberty's blood and strange were the ways by which shapes of things to come were hammered

out in flames of incredible suffering, valor and tenacity. Filipino riflemen fired from undergrowth at the yellow waves of destruction: U. S. machine guns barked stubbornly from foxholes: from the ground secret explosives rose with a roar to rip the foe asunder, and warriors contending for the fate of human nature and conduct perished across each other without respite or quarter: while behind freedom's canny artillery startled skies looked down upon the sublime bravery of doctors, nurses and orderlies stanching the blood of men created equal spelling out definitions of democracy riveted into the memory of generations unborn. Between battles the American heart stood forth strong and clean with life's affirmations: men from all the states got to know each other for the first time under the immense weight of death: they told each other the story of simple lives in factory, farm and office whose end was now identical with agony and glory: and after the incredible hell of Bataan they saw themselves skipping purgatory and going right through without local stops to the celestial abode which Americans like these surely deserve. And the shining miracle of it all, that in this insane typhoon of carnage they talked of first and last things with that humanity and tolerance whose deepest accents are American, as a coast artillery private announced from the parapet of a gunpit the soul of his people facing the heavens and the earth and all that is between them, determined that to quit fighting for the good old U. S. A. just doesn't make sense. They never quit: they went again and again into battle with gaping wounds in their limbs to fire their sublime, naked courage at relentless foes, etching forever upon the memory of their great commander the vision of grim, gaunt, ghastly Americans unafraid to the desperate, inspiring end.

"Let's get married soon," I said to Joan.

"The sooner the better."

"Tuesday?"

"No, you've got to finish your analysis."

"That won't take long. I'm on the last lap now."

"The moment it's over, then. . . . Paul, you've made me very happy. More than anything else in the world, I want to be your wife." A happy smile illumined her face. "It will be fun to plan our life together."

"The war will plan life for us," I said.

"Yes," she said quietly, "I've thought of that. Did I tell you? Yesterday I registered for a Red Cross nursing course."

"You did? How right you are. Everybody ought to do something. I wonder what I can do?"

"For men like yourself, there'll be plenty to do. I know I'll be proud of you."

"It's the strangest feeling, Joan: I can't believe there was ever a time I didn't know you."

I took her hand and sensed in her vibrant being love's tenderness fused absolutely with that independence of spirit which marks the women of the New World; and I was glad she could deeply surrender yet remain deeply free; and watched her beautiful young face—serene, self-contained, profoundly generous—as she turned it now to look once more out the window into the living avenue below.

The last of Bataan's heroes were marching by and I thought of Thermopylae and how strange it is that one of the most celebrated battles of all time is remembered with supreme admiration not because it was won but despite the fact it was lost: its heroes have been glorified by generations of poets and historians for standing their ground against enormous odds, hacking relentlessly away at the foe till the very last moment when death overwhelmed them. At Thermopylae, the hot gate leading from Locris to Thessaly between Mount Oeta and the sea, Leonidas and his three hundred defended a pass only fourteen yards wide yet as broad as the earth, as high as the heavens and endless as time. Under the hordes of the Eastern invader all perished: the foe took the pass: but the heroism and devotion of the defenders and their unyielding leader won them a unique place in the hearts and imaginations of their own and future times. But always, everywhere the future determines the past: Thermopylae is remembered because the Greeks lost the battle and won the war. And did not that American speak truly who said every great crisis in human history is a pass of Thermopylae where there is always a Leonidas and his three hundred to die if they cannot conquer? He said this as if his poetic antennae had foresensed the incredible valor of his own countrymen at that Thermopylae which centuries to come will call Bataan and Corregidor: and to my surprise I found myself thinking of this war which involves the entire human race not as an exile but as an American.

"Darling," I said to Joan.

"Yes, dear."

"Do you like babies?"

"I'm crazy about them, especially those who will look like us."

Hague was not due in New York for a while, but his wife invited Joan and myself to spend the July Fourth weekend with her and some friends at their country home in Rondout Valley. We told her of our plan to get married and she left us very nicely alone.

I had never seen the American countryside before, but if I may judge by the Catskill landscapes it is as magnificent as anything on earth. But I do not pretend to be objective about it. Walking with

Joan through the fragrant pine wood, I felt her radiating a profound love which rendered everything beautiful. How marvelous her face was that day, how miraculously sweet her voice as we talked about ourselves, the world and the future.

Again and again we came back to the war, and I finally had to confess I had decided to offer my services to whatever branch of the national defense would find them useful. I would do that right after our wedding, I said.

"Of course," Joan said simply, as if there was nothing else a man could do nowadays.

Then I thought I might as well tell her the worst.

"Darling," I began, "do you know how much I really love you?"

"I have some idea," she said, "but tell me anyway. I like to hear it."

"I love you better than anybody on earth."

"I love you more than that," she said. "Anyway, longer."

"Please don't be hurt at what I'm going to say. You know I'm a veteran of the first World War."

"I know," she said. "You're going to enlist in the army."

"I'm going to try."

"I expected that. Sure it hurts, but it's okay, if that's the way you want it."

"The last thing I want to do is to part from you," I said. "But I can't stay out of it. I just can't do it. It means too much."

"I know how you feel, dear."

"They may not take me in the army. Then I'll try something else. I'll keep knocking on every door till they find a place for me. Surely there is a place for everybody who wants to help now."

"I'm sure there is," she said quietly.

We stretched out on a soft bed of pine needles and I took Joan into my arms and, kissing her long with all the ardor of my soul, looked into her deep eyes and thought again, after all these years, of the eternal miracle of love which dissolves all barriers between strangers and fuses them into a single life of high companionship where neither lives without the other.

The forest was cool and shady and, through the lofty green pines, fragments of amazing sky came through incredibly azure in their eternal assurance of life's continuity; and I held Joan in my arms through a magic hour of felicity.

When we sat up, Joan's face was so beautiful and serene that my whole existence seemed like a long pilgrimage toward this radiant goal, and I suddenly remembered a poem I had learned somewhere in my youth whose freshness now returned with a new capacity for life, so that I loved not less though less the show appeared, and I recited the remembered lines to her as if they were

our common testament of marriage: How vast the sky's serene cathedral vaults above the incense of the grass: time halts, it seems, forever: here, beneath the sun, ignored the swift and happy moments run: in the green silence and the golden heat, we hear far off our blood's unhurried beat: the crude remembrance and rebellion cease: our hearts lie grateful for the summer peace.

We lit cigarettes and became aware of the external world. I had brought yesterday's newspaper with me and we began to read it together and a strange thing happened.

All my life I've thought about the square and the circle, dream and reality, in connection with Europe: its past, present and future: its millions and heroes. But on this day I suddenly became aware that America, my new homeland, was celebrating its independence amidst the greatest crisis in all its history, and for the first time my mind was filled with new names, metaphors and realities. I had heard these names before, but never until now had their immense universal meaning stamped itself so powerfully upon my brain demanding categorical answers about identity.

I was reading to Joan an editorial quoting the letter which John Adams wrote Abigail immediately after the Declaration of Independence was adopted.

Yesterday, he said, the Greatest Question was decided which ever was debated in America, and a greater perhaps never was or will be decided among men. I read these words from husband to wife a hundred and sixty-six years after they were penned and was overwhelmed by their simple accuracy: truly, what greater question has ever been debated or decided in the annals of the earth than that all men are created equal and endowed by their creator with inalienable rights, life and liberty and the pursuit of happiness? And strange how all through history, always, everywhere, the heroes and pioneers of peoples embarking upon a new way of life know with all the force of their high faculties that a great turning point is here, that something tremendous is emerging under their eyes. Their hands are upon gates to a future incalculably better than the past: their hope, determination and blood are about to render fertile a conflict whose agony will be exceeded only by its fruit. See with what certainty Adams assures his wife that the day on which the Declaration was born will be the most memorable epoch in America's history: and he does not want her to imagine for a moment he says this only because he is transported with enthusiasm: no, the liberators of peoples, the founders of republics whose seal is the future know perfectly what the price of freedom is always, everywhere. Adams is well aware of the Toil, Blood and Treasure it will cost to maintain this Declaration, to support and defend these states: and always, everywhere in the hearts of a people consecrated to achieve freedom

for themselves and keep its momentous benedictions living through the years for all their descendants: always, everywhere through the single infrangible will of its leaders there blaze unyielding eyes of hope which pierce the Gloom and behold at once Rays of ravishing Light and Glory: and that liberated volition, resolute above all momentary doubt, defeat and despair conscripts the oldest riddles of the universe and smelts them directly in the crucible of necessary combat for undeniable good. Adams sees in a flash not through a glass darkly but face to face the naked inexorable reply of all the ages that the End is worth all the Means and that Posterity will triumph in that Day's Transactions which he trusts in God no man will ever rue.

And who regrets the Toil, Blood and Treasure now? Who would have the cost unpaid, the Declaration undeclared, the Revolutionary War unwaged, the high American dream undreamed, the great American deed of liberty undone?

And who, five years from now, seeing the Declaration fully vindicated on a thousand battlefields around this moment's aching globe; who, seeing independence shedding its Rays of ravishing Light over this majestic land and across the whole wide world, will fail to see at once that more than worth all the Means employed in this the greatest of human ordeals is the End achieved, the liberty subserved, the dignity of man restored at last?

And that afternoon in the pine woods of Rondout Valley, looking into Joan's beautiful grave eyes, I tried to tell her some of the things which seemed to confirm the decisions I had been making about our life together. Out of the love and generosity of her heart she understood perfectly.

She knew what I meant in saying that for our generation, as for all people at the great turning points in the life of man, all previous history has been a long, painful preparation for advances to come: we have a wonderful heritage from the past, tremendous ideals and experiences: and now for the first time all the nations of the world inspired by the various great aspirations of religious or political dream have united to extirpate the summation of evil: and if the free nations fight the war and settle the peace vigorously and victoriously and learn to deal wisely and generously with each other for their own sake and the sake of the future, what a fine world they can make at last.

I tried to explain these vague, persistent hopes to Joan and she understood.

"Yes," she said, "something like this is bound to happen or the whole world is a lie, and the whole world can't be a lie."

"From now on," I said, "my home is America. This is where

I want to spend the rest of my life with you. Yours is the land of which I shall be a citizen, and yours the people I shall call mine, and for this people I want to labor and fight with all the power of my being."

I was sitting under the pines in that forest of Rondout Valley when I said this, and Joan stretched out on the fragrant bed of needles and laid her beautiful head on my knees and I stroked it gently and tried to tell her about this thing which was so hard to make clear even to myself because it meant not only a complete break with all that had gone before, with all the worlds I had loved both in reality and in the realm of memory and imagination, but also because it meant a rebirth in time through my love for this woman and the land whose daughter she was. The two loves, so new, fresh, firm, irrevocable in their immaculate power, appeared as one thing identical with the core of my being, and I could no longer think of the future without thinking of it as Joan and her country to which I now belonged equally and identically; and when I tried to explain it I said something to this effect: Men have carried proud names in history: the name of a people which bore or adopted them, molding their souls, filling their sinews with iron: Indian, Chinese, Egyptian: Aztec, Jew, Greek, Roman: French, English, Russian: and many other immortal designations luminous with rich gifts of earth and spirit garnered from the barely deciphered past: names which have brought the most priceless treasure to a grateful future of endless liberating vistas: and now a new name, proud and glorious as the best in the whole of tenacious time, pervades a horizon already exalted with the dawn of tomorrow: a name of fresh, resurgent energy, power and vision: strong, tolerant and free by indestructible heritage: felicitously embarking upon new ways of knowledge, creation and justice blessing generations of men unborn: and that is the name I should like to bear and deserve with modesty, pride and gladness through life, death and time: always to the end of things and in the memory of those who love me, I want to be an American.

And when I had said this, I took Joan in my arms again because my testament of faith was meant at the same time for her and for the country which was now our common mother: for only those who love themselves and their own lust for dominion can serve big disembodied words and shapeless abstractions of geography and politics: we ordinary mortals care for a place, a party or a land for the sake of veritable people we know and love, for the sake of living bodies and souls without whom the world is for us no world. And kissing Joan again I said:

"Angel, I wish I could tell you how much I love you."

"You don't have to, dear; you show me," she said.

Oh, that was a day of strange confessions, doctor; for Joan was so profoundly and unconditionally sympathetic to what I said that I kept back nothing and even confided those fears which must now haunt everyone who is not a liar and a cheat, the fear that in the great conflict which is the summation of all previous history and the sanguinary threshold to the future we are driven less by desire for the good which is within our grasp than by dread of the evil which is at our door, and the fear that once more the result of incredible agony may mock the hopes which inspire us. It was impossible to deny these fears and impossible to yield to them: for only the very young and inexperienced imagine that a love such as filled Joan and myself exists uniquely for them alone: Oh, there is love in the world, and where there is love, there is creation and birth: and I found myself telling Joan with a faith made firmer and more enduring by the very suffering it had incurred that we must not listen to those ghosts of an irreversible past who try to console us with the myth that man finds himself in death. No, man is not a handful of salt thrown back into the sea to find his resting place at last: man is man, and when he dies upon the battlefield it is not for the sake of death but for the sake of life and therefore not alone for the sake of the good companions who survive him but for his own sake. From the cradle to the grave, from the amoeba to that truly human being toward which we are evolving, man's acts are circumscribed: and yet the universe is open for his investigation, the earth responds to his hands, his brain can think, his heart can love, his soul can believe, his imagination can conceive a good life which his will can mold out of the very laws which circumscribe him but which, once he knows and masters them, are vast levers of liberation.

And so wise is the heart in love that, although I used words needlessly long and vague, Joan understood everything; yes, even that part where I tried to grope toward some belief about man's precarious position in the universe; for now I felt that nature, independent of thought, can be transformed by thought socially organized. Isolated thought is impotent: geared to life, precisely implemented with outer realities, it can alter the face of nature and its own shape and power. Hasn't the day come to terminate the fantastic disparities which end in blood? Now that the molecules no longer run blindly, is it not time for men to open their eyes? Once men see that they, like all created beings, run in accordance with the whole of which they are a part, they may at last converge as good world-wide companions along carefully selected directions toward their deepest destinies of freedom. The valor generated in battle need not return to sleep: there are other great deeds, other victories to rouse and

reward it: the world is endlessly in transit, crashing through all the obdurate centuries toward endless goals: man transcends his ancestor the beast, moldy boundaries of knowledge dissolve into unexpected vistas of comprehension; history at last outlives the ancient curse of caste and boldly plunges toward the unknown horizon of real equalities.

But first, foremost, unconditionally we must win the war. Yes, even this moment of private love was bathed in the vast light of universal events. Everything you touch or want these days is a fragment which nothing can detach from the destiny of two billion people the world over, not one of whom can escape the great ordeal: for love is nothing without the future, and our future depends wholly upon the outcome of the struggle of which we are a part in every atom of our existence whose new shapes can be determined only through victory.

Hope is to public weal what love is to personal happiness. Hope is love of the future. And that hallowed day with Joan in the pine woods was filled with the exalted certainty that, while no man knows precisely what the future holds, all men know that a stupendous opportunity awaits mankind, one of the very greatest in all our tormented crusade for wisdom and virtue across centuries of darkness and light.

A dozen times in five thousand years men have found it necessary to proclaim that all former perspectives and motives were absurd. They were right. Out of their exaggeration came those small advances which added up to the long distance we have traversed from the jungle which spawned us.

We must do this again. All that has frightened and inspired us in this century has lost its validity in the immense sea of blood roaring across the earth. Verified scientific laws remain to test and open further gates to the future: but the heart's wisdom, the dynamic power behind all deed, has yet to shatter animal habit and the obsession of dogma. The creation of the good life requires an act of supreme intelligence and courage: the emancipation of man's spirit. And in that sense also this war which terminates five millennia of trial and error could be, if men really want it to be, a war of universal liberation whose annihilation of this day's evil is the prelude to a crusade against all evil.

And when, on that strange and happy afternoon of love, hope and faith I tried to tell Joan these things, she asked quietly:

"Will you believe all this on the battlefield, too?"

"Nobody can tell how he will behave on the battlefield," I said. "But I think there I'll believe these things more than ever, because in my heart and in spite of everything, I know that for you and

me, as for all mankind in this terrible night of judgment, dawn is tomorrow."

"And if you die?"

The words escaped her lips in spite of herself. Hypocrisy fears to speak of these things, but love is never afraid to speak of death because love's main business in the world is life.

"This may sound foolish," I said, "but having died once and having been revived, I know that life goes on, and there is something in every man which makes death more tolerable when he knows that life goes on to good ends, that the best in man may yet prevail. But it will be hard on you, angel."

"Yes," she said, "it will be hard. I've been thinking about it since you said you'll try to enlist. It will be terribly hard, but I can't believe the worst. I think of the millions who will come back and somehow I feel you will be among them."

"That's because you love me," I said.

"I do love you, and that makes everything simpler."

"It must be so," I said. "The moment I knew I loved you, everything seemed easier. Life, death and time seemed easier."

"You have no idea how happy you make me," she said, "and if I lose you . . ."

"Believe me, I'll come back to you."

"What do you mean?"

"I'll survive."

"And come back to me?"

"Yes."

"You sound so sure."

"I am sure."

"How can you know?" she said.

"I don't know how I know, but I know."

"Say it again," she urged. "I want to hear it."

"I'll come back to you, angel, and we'll have children and live happily on a good earth full of good people doing good things."

"Say it again."

"I love you."

I took her in my arms, and when I heard the whole world beating in her heart with the supreme happiness of being loved, I felt as if what I had said was true, that we would outlive the great ordeal and in our own time would yet behold a fresh morning in the life of reason under whose luminous sky the world's great age always begins anew.

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